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A HISTORY  
OF THE  
TOWN OF BUSHWICK.  
KINGS COUNTY. N. Y.

BY  
HENRY R. STILES, M. D.

AND OF THE  
TOWN, VILLAGE AND CITY OF WILLIAMSBURGH,  
KINGS COUNTY, N. Y.

BY  
JOHN M. STEARNS, Esq.

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# HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF BUSHWICK.

By *Henry R. Stiles. A.M. W.D.*

With the co-operation of J. M. STEARNS, Esq., Brooklyn, E. D.

**ITS EARLY SETTLERS AND PATENTS.**—The territory embraced within the ancient town of Bushwick was purchased from its Indian proprietors, by the West India Company, in August, 1638; and its earliest settlement begun in 1641–1650 by certain Swedes and Norwegians, or Normans as they were called, together with a few Dutchmen.

These persons, such as *Bergen* and *Moll* at the Wallabout, *Carstensen* and *Borsin* on the East river, *Volkertse* at Greenpoint, and *Jan the Swede* on the site of the subsequent village of Bushwick, seem to have occupied and cultivated their boweries, independently of one another, and subject directly to the authority of the director and council at Manhattan, from whom they received their patents. It is probable, indeed, that they had originally strayed into these wilds with a sort of purpose of pre-empting the lands, trusting to secure a title when the opportunity should occur. Naturally they erected their lodges, or huts, near the small creeks flowing into the East river (or, rather, subject to its tides); since these afforded convenient landing-places for small boats, which were then the only means of communication with Manhattan Island. We have no evidence of any attempt to lay out a regular settlement, or to organize a town, until 1660, a period of over twenty years from the date of the first patent.

In the consideration of Hans Hansen Bergen's patent at the Waaleboght, page 8, it will be remembered that we reached and somewhat overlapped the boundary line between the towns of Brooklyn and Bushwick, —a boundary line, which, according to the earliest patent of the town of Brooklyn, was identical with Bergen's northerly bounds. It might be designated on the map of the present city of Brooklyn, by a line drawn from the East river, following the course of Division avenue, to about at its junction with Tenth street, and from that point extending in a somewhat south-easterly direction towards Newtown.

Adjoining this land of Bergen's on the north, was a

triangular tract of land, which was granted by the West India Company, September 7, 1641, to LAMBERT HUYBERTSEN MOLL, a ship carpenter, who had purchased it from one Cornelis Jacobsen Stille, on the 29th of the preceding month. It had, even then, a house upon it, and this Stille was probably one of those "squatters" to whom we have already referred. This patent embraced, by estimation, fifty acres, though it was subsequently found to be nearer sixty. It extended along the East river, from the old Brooklyn line to a little north of the present Broadway, and from the East river front to near Tenth street. The confirmatory patent, granted by Gov. Nicolls, in 1667, clearly identifies it as including what has been more recently known as the *Peter Miller Farm*, the *Berry Farm*, and *Boerum's Woods*. Moll seems to have removed to Esopus, about 1663, and the land became the property of Jacobus Kip, of Kipsburg, in the City of New York, where he was a prominent citizen and official; and, though it was confirmed to him by Gov. Nicolls, in 1667, it does not appear that he ever resided on this farm, or even in Bushwick, nor that he paid taxes here. During his ownership, a block-house was erected, as a resort for the scattered settlers in case of hostility from the Indians, upon the high point of land which jutted into the river about the foot of South Fourth street, and which was known in the olden time as the "Keike" or "Lookout." The name came to be applied to the high land overlooking the whole shore through the present Fourth street, and southward to the Boerum land, and so down to the Wallabout Bay. In 1693, Kip's executors sold the farm to James (sometimes called Jacobus) Bobin, a resident of Long Island, who was in possession until his death about 1741. It is afterwards found, 1761, in the possession of one Abraham Kershow (Carshow, Cershaw, or Corson) who devised it to his sons Jacob and Martin, who were in possession as late as 1786, when they divided the farm, Jacob taking the northerly, and Martin the southerly half. Jacob Kershow's portion passed, by deed, to one

Peter Miller, in 1790, who devised it to his sons, David P. Miller and John P. Miller, and died in 1816. David P. Miller sold his, the northerly, portion, to Daniel S. Griswold, and it partly passed to one John Henry, who had it surveyed into city lots. John P. Miller sold his, the southerly part, in 1823, to Abraham Meserole, by whom it was subsequently surveyed into building lots. Martin Kershow's portion, by sale under a Chancery decree, in 1820, passed to Jacob Berry, who surveyed and mapped it into building lots, his map bearing the date of 1828:

That portion of the Moll Patent, subsequently known as *Boerum's Woods*, passed to Jacob Bloom, the owner of what became the Abraham Boerum farm in the present Nineteenth Ward. This land was owned by Philip Harmon, and came, at length, to one John Moore, and one Graddon, and was, probably, the latest of the Williamsburgh farm lands to be surveyed into city lots. The seven acres purchased by John Skillman, in 1807, was the subject of lively land-jobbing operations in 1836. Horace Greeley purchased lots there; and conceived them to be a mine of wealth; but, on a financial revulsion, was glad to deed them to the holder of his mortgages. So of Paul J. Fish and others, joint and several speculators there.

The next plantation to Moll's, on the north, was that ascribed by STILES (perhaps erroneously—since it is yet doubtful whether "Mareckawick," which he gives as the determining point of identification, can be definitely located) to Moll's son, RYER LAMBERTSEN (MOLL), by patent of March 23, 1646. He removed to the Delaware River (probably about 1657); and, in 1667, it was conveyed to David Jochems, by whom, in 1673, it was sold to one Van Pelt.

This farm of 107 acres, extending along the East river from near the present Broadway to North First street, with its easterly line near the present Seventh street—is first absolutely found in the possession of one Jean Meserol (Meserole, or Meserol), a native of Picardy, in France, who came to this country in April, 1663, together with his "wife and sucking child," in the ship *Spotted Cow*. No deed or patent has ever been discovered, which will determine the date or the manner of Meserole's entrance upon the occupancy of this estate. It was probably by virtue of what we understand as "squatter sovereignty." He built his house upon the "Keikout" bluff, before alluded to; and this structure was probably the same which formed the westerly wing of the "Old Miller Homestead," which, after surviving for over 200 years, was demolished about twenty years ago. This house is said to have been a favorite boarding-place of the famous Captain Kidd, who found it a convenient retreat, and yet accessible to New York, whenever he came ashore between his piratical trips. Tradition also has it that, many years before, while engaged in his nefarious voyages, he had made New York his domestic

port; and, that, amid the woods of Bushwick, he had marked the grave of one whom he had loved—the daughter of a prominent settler—and whom he had hoped to make his wife. But she died, during one of his absences; and, though he afterwards married, yet he often sought, as opportunity offered, the grave of his lost love. Whether this, or the facilities of secrecy combined with nearness to the great port across the river, drew him so frequently to the Meserole homestead, on the Keikout, can only now be a matter of surmise.

To return, however, to the Keikout Farm, no deed or patent has ever been discovered which determines the manner or time of Meserole's entrance upon its occupancy. He died in 1695; and devised his entire estate to his widow Jonica. He left a son, Jan Meserole, Junior, who was already married and domiciled at the old homestead, having two sons, John and Cornelius, and several daughters. He entered into the domestic interests of the old homestead, after his father's death, in a spirit of filial affection and kindness; and his mother declined to prove her husband's will, as against her son, thinking that as he was her heir at law, as well as heir of her late husband, he would take the estate in any event. She afterwards married a second husband by the name of Dennison, but this did not disturb the kindly relations between herself and her first-born son. Nor was the second husband aware of the existence of old Jan Meserol's will, by which he would properly have been established by courtesy in the occupancy of the estate. The old will had been cast aside, by both mother and son, with seeming confidence that it possessed no bearing upon the family interests; and Jan Meserol, Jr., came at last to consider himself in full possession, with a full title to the estate. After seventeen years, he made his will, in 1710 (proved 1712), devising the Kuykout farm to his two sons, John and Cornelius; and giving other lands to his wife, and making other provisions for his daughters. His mother survived him but five days; and his heirs having proved his will, John and Cornelius undertook the management of the Keikout farm, as tenants in common, working together in mutual harmony and good will, and so continued respecting what they admitted to be each other's rights for nearly four years. But, one day, John Meserol, the 3rd, in looking over some papers formerly belonging to his grandmother Jonica, happened to find his grandfather's unproved will. On submitting the document to competent legal advice, he found that, under the English law of primogeniture then existing in the colony, he could, by producing proofs of his grandfather's will, claim the estate as sole heir-at-law of his grandmother Jonica. It was necessary to prove the will of the grandfather, who had now been dead 21 years, and the signatures of the witnesses, but one of whom survived. To make the proof more effectual, and to perpetuate

the testimony, a bill was filed in Chancery, in which John Meserol was complainant, and Cornelius Meserol, Christopher Rugsby, and the Rector, and inhabitants of the city of New York, in communion with the church of England, as by law established, were defendants. At the hearing, the proofs of the will were duly taken on interrogatories addressed to several persons produced as witnesses, and the same was fully established as a valid will before Robert Hunter, Governor and acting Chancellor of the Province of New York. The enrollment of the decree was fully certified by Rip Van Dam, one of the masters in chancery, and is of record in the files of the court of Chancery at Albany as completed on the 17th day of July, 1717.

Cornelius Meserol seems to have surrendered his claim to the farm at discretion, as he did not appear on the hearing and is said to have emigrated to New Jersey and to have been thereafter forgotten by his kindred.

John Meserol the third took possession of the entire farm, and lived at the Kuykout up to the time of his death in 1756. He left five sons, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Peter and John, and as many daughters, all of whom appear to have respectably married, to-wit: Janetta Colyer, Maritta Fardon, Sarah Skillman, Catrina Miller, and Maria Devoe, all of whom will be recognized as ancestors in the leading families of the late town of Bushwick.

But the will of this third John Meserol, as proved in 1756, intimates a remembrance of the old suit in chancery, by which the testator obtained the farm; in closing with these significant words: "Any of my children making a law-suit about my estate shall forfeit all claim to any share therein, and be entirely cut off by my executors, &c."

So ended the third generation of the Meserols at the Kuykout, and indeed the proprietorship of the name in that estate; although a small part of it, through a descendant from Catrina Miller, one of the daughters, came to the family of Abraham Meserole. Meserole's heirs subsequently disposed of the Kuykout estate (107 acres) as follows: Isaac Meserole sold to Francis Titus a parcel on the East River, on both sides of the present Grand street, from near South First to near North First street, and extending east far enough to make 12 acres. Thomas Skillman, the husband of Sarah Meserole, bought the share next south of Isaac's, above-mentioned, and extending from near South First to South Third street, as now laid out, and from the River to near Sixth street. This land was sold to Charles Titus, in 1785, and was by him devised to his son Charles, in 1802. He sold to Justus Thompson, and he sold about six acres at the river front to Noah Waterbury. The balance passed, under foreclosure, to Gen. Jeremiah Johnson, who shortly after sold it to Garret and Grover C. Furman. By them it was mapped into city lots.

Christopher Rugsby was tenant of the Meseroles in

1717, and lived on the southern half of the Keikout farm, his house being between James Bobin's, at the foot of South Tenth, and the Meserole homestead at the foot of South Fourth Street. This land is believed to be identical with the sixteen or seventeen acres to which one Abraham Schenck acquired title before 1761, probably from Meserole in his lifetime. Schenck conveyed this land to Andries Conselyea, by deed, August 15, 1761; by whom it was devised to his sons, Andrew and John Conselyea, the latter being the father of the late Andrew J. Conselyea. In a mutual partition of the farm, John took that part adjoining the present Broadway and on both sides of South Sixth to a little east of Third Street. He conveyed it, 1821, to David Dunham, who died seized of it. It was subsequently partitioned and surveyed into city lots, and a map filed. Of the other portion Andrew Conselyea died seized; and, after various judicial proceedings by his heirs, it was mapped into city lots and sold on the market.

The balance of the Keikout farm was purchased by David Molenaar (*alias* Miller) the husband of Catrina Meserole. By his will (1779, proved 1789) he devised the north part of his farm to his son David; and the south part to his son William. William Miller subsequently sold his share to Frederick Devoe, who had it surveyed into city lots, afterwards dying and leaving sons, the late John and William L. Devoe, who, with their mother, sold most of this land in their life time. David Miller died in 1815, in possession of the land devised to him by his father, devising the life use thereof to his wife Maria, who survived him until her age exceeded a hundred years. He then devised most of this farm to his son David, who, though he died (1823) comparatively young, had attained distinction as a captain in the War of 1812. He left no children, and his sister, Maria, wife of Abraham Meserole, and his brother,



THE OLD MILLER HOUSE.

John Miller, succeeded to his inheritance. His widow lost her dower, as her husband had only an estate in expectancy, after the death of his mother. John Miller and Abraham Meserole (the latter in the interest of his wife Maria) divided the land between them, and mapped out their shares into city lots. The site of the old



homestead, after the old lady's death, was sold for building lots—the venerable house demolished—the earth dug down some sixty feet, and the “Old Keikout” thenceforth was only “a thing of the past.”

There remained, however, a road or bridle-path, known as the “Keikout-road,” which seems to have dated from the very beginning of the settlement. It ran from the side of the village laid out around the old Bushwick Church, and down near the present North Second street to Tenth, near Union avenue. Then, turning southerly, and with various zigzags, now touching the present Ninth street, and again, further south, intersecting Tenth street, diagonally, it came to the present Broadway near Ninth street, at the old Brooklyn line. It again turned west, along or near said line, about a rod in width, to the shore of the East River. Then, turning northerly along the East River, it extended to Bushwick Creek, then “Norman’s Kill. It was, doubtless, a Pent-road, with gates, or bars, separating the different farms through which it passed.

Next came the patents comprising the land lying between the northerly line of the Meserole farm and Bushwick creek; and between the East River and a line drawn about equidistant between Fifth and Sixth streets, from the junction of that branch of the creek, which now rises near Ninth and Grand streets, to the north-westerly corner of the Meserole patent. These patents, three in number, belonged respectively to CLAES CARSTENSEN, sometimes termed “Claes the Norman,” to GEORGE BAXTER, the English secretary to the Dutch council, and to DAVID ANDRUS, or Andriese.

*Carstensen’s* patent, which was granted to him by Director Kieft, September 5th, 1645, included 29 morgens, 553 rods.

*Baxter’s* patent, of twenty-five morgens, was granted July 6, 1643.

Of *Andrus’s* patent no record has been formed.

It is not probable that any of these individuals ever occupied their farms. Baxter became a patentee for Gravesend in 1645, was subsequently much employed in public affairs; and finally, on account of his political rascalities, was obliged, in 1656, to leave the country. Of Andriese nothing whatever is known; and Carstensen in some way became possessed of their shares of this property. This same tract, comprising some 130 acres, was, in 1647, granted by the governor and council to Jan Forbus, and in 1660 transferred to Pieter Jans de Norman, whose widow afterward married Joost Cocknuyt. Paulus Richards bought the farm in 1664, and the lands do not appear in the records again for forty years. Then they are found in the hands of Tennis Mauritz Covert, of Monmouth, N. J., a son of Mauritz Covert, whose widow Antie Fonteyn married Francis Titus, of Bushwick. By him it was conveyed to Titus, in 1719. Francis Titus, a son of Capt. Titus Syrach de Vries, part owner of a grist-mill at New

Utrecht, in 1660, married a second wife, and died about 1760, leaving five sons and five daughters. He resided on what was known as the Col. Francis Titus farm, in Williamsburgh, consisting of 58 acres of upland and 4 of meadow, to which he added 40 adjoining on the easterly side, by purchase from Wm. Latin; and about 12 acres of the original Keikout farm, near the present Grand street ferry, bought of Isaac Meserole. He also bought from Joseph Skillman the northerly half (about 25 acres) of the Jacob Boerum farm, in the 16th ward of the present city, and had considerable other property east of the present Bushwick avenue, and in the New Bushwick land. This property, by his will (proved 1764), was devised to his sons, the eldest of whom, Francis, occupied the homestead farm, and also acquired some 18 acres, by purchase of David Wortman, located between the present Sixth and Ninth streets, and mostly between Grand and North First streets. He died in 1801, leaving the homestead to his son, Col. Francis Titus, who erected a house on First, near North Sixth, now torn down.

East of the farms of Meserole and Carstensen, lay that of JAN DE SWEDE, or John the Swede. It probably comprised most, if not all, of the land bounded south by the farms of Bergen and Moll; on the west by those of Meserole and Carstensen; and on the east by the ancient road known as the Swede’s Fly. This road marked the easterly bounds of Jan de Swede’s meadow, which is mentioned as one of the westerly boundaries of the township of Bushwick, in its patent of 1687; and was itself the easterly boundary of the first chartered village of Williamsburgh, in 1827. John the Swede’s meadow, therefore, was between Eleventh and Twelfth streets; and possibly, he was, also, the original proprietor of the back lands owned by Wortmans. He seems to be first mentioned in Baxter’s patent, in 1643, and was probably one of the “squatter sovereigns” whose settlement preceded grants, briefs or patents. It is to be noted that a branch of Norman’s Kill, of sufficient depth to float small boats, in early times extended to, or a little south of, the present Grand street, near Ninth street; and, for the reasons stated, the inference is that his house was located near the head of navigation on this branch creek. The fact that a fresh water, clay-basin pond, since known as part of the commons, near North First and Ninth streets, favors this presumption; and STILES’ suggestion that his farm extended east to embrace the subsequently incorporated Bushwick village, is contradicted by the Swede’s Fly or Kuykont road, being referred to as the eastern boundary of his farm, by the charter of the town of Bushwick. In many of the patents or ground briefs, the tenure or occupation of prior settlers is recited; and we may infer that resident patentees were on the land prior to the date of their patents, or bought out others, who were in possession.

The extensive tract between Jan the Swede’s land

and Bushwick avenue, comprising land, which subsequently contained nearly one-third of the city of Williamsburgh, was owned, a little more than a century ago, by one DANIEL BORDET. It is designated on modern maps as lands of John Devoe, William P. Powers, Abraham Meserole, James Scholes, Abraham Remsen, Andrew Conselyea, McKibbin and Nichols, and others.

A tract of land was, in the year 1667, patented by Governor Nicolls to one HUMPHREY CLAY, then of the city of New York.

This tract, lying on both sides of what is now Meeker avenue, adjoining Newtown creek, had just been patented to Adam Moll, in August, 1646; by him transported to William Goulding; and by him transferred to Claude Berbine and Anthony Jeroe, of Maspeth Kill. These parties, on the 7th of January, 1653, conveyed the property, "with the houseing thereupon," to Jacob Steendam. And "whereas the said Jacob Steendam," says the old patent to Clay, "hath been absent and gone out of this country, for the space of eight years, during which time the houseing, which was upon the said land is wholly come to ruin, and the land hath been neglected and unmanured, without any care taken thereof, by the said Jacob Steendam, or any that hath lawful power from him, contrary to the laws established in such cases, within this government," the said land was declared to be forfeited. And therefore, "to the intent that no plantation within this government should lie waste and unmanured, and that a house, or houses, may be built upon the old foundations, as also, for divers other good causes and considerations," the same was fully granted to Humphrey Clay. Clay probably came to New York from New London, in the colony of Connecticut, where he had been an inn-keeper, perhaps from as early a date as 1655. In 1664, he was fined 40s. and costs, for keeping an inmate contrary to law, and his wife Katherine was "presented for selling liquors at her house, selling lead to the Indians, profanation of the Sabbath, card-playing and entertaining strange men." Upon trial before the court of assistants, Mr. Clay and wife were convicted of keeping a disorderly house, and fined £40, or to leave the colony within six months, in which case half the fine was to be remitted. They chose the latter course and removed to New York; and thence, in 1667, to Bushwick.

ABRAHAM RYCKEN, or de Rycke, the progenitor of the present Rycker families of New York, New Jersey and elsewhere, received from Director Kieft, in 1638, an allotment of land which has been located by THOMSON in Gowanus, and by RYKER in the Wallabout of Brooklyn. A closer examination of the original patent shows that it was located in the territory then recently purchased from the Indians by the West India Company, and which afterward formed the old town of Bushwick. Rycken's patent probably embraced the lands between Newtown Creek, Lombard street, Metro-

politan avenue and the old road running from the junction of Metropolitan and Bushwick avenues to Porter avenue, near Anthony street. This land of Rycken's in Bushwick, or a portion of it with an addition to the meadows as far as Laquier's mill, is afterwards found in possession of one Jochem Verscheur, who, in 1712, conveyed it to Cornelius Johannes and David Van Catts, by whose family name it has since been known.

**Greenpoint.**—The greater part of the present 17th ward of the City of Brooklyn was known, from its earliest settlement, as Greenpoint, being, in fact, a neck of land embraced between Maspeth Kill, now Newtown creek, and Norman's Kill, now Bushwick creek. It was originally granted, in 1645, to DIRCK VOLKERTSEN, surnamed the Norman, who was a ship-carpenter. He lived on the northerly side of Bushwick creek, near the East River, in an old stone house, which was demolished some years since, and on the site, Messrs. Samuel Sneed and Jabez Williams built large and fine dwellings. Volkertsen, in old documents, is frequently called Dirck the Norman; and thus, from his lands and dwelling in that vicinity, Bushwick creek derived its ancient name of *Norman's kill*.

May 1st, 1670, Governor Lovelace granted a confirmatory patent to Daniel Jochems, who had become possessed of a part of this land by marriage with the widow Jacob Hey, to whom, in 1653, Volkertsen had conveyed it.

By inheritance and purchase, Captain Peter Praa, of Newtown, who had become the second husband of Maria Hey, daughter of Christina Cappaens by her first husband, subsequently became the owner of the land conveyed by the Volkertsen patent. Captain Praa, of Newtown, was the son of Peter Praa, a highly respectable Huguenot exile from Dieppe, in France, who came to this country with his family in 1659, and died in Cripplebush, March 6, 1663. Captain Praa, who was born at Leyden, in 1655, during his parent's temporary stay at that place, was a man of much enterprise and public spirit. After his marriage he spent the greater portion of his life at Bushwick, where he commanded the militia, and was especially distinguished for his superior skill in horsemanship. Captain Praa subsequently purchased the balance, in 1719, from Dirck, Philip and Nicholas Volkertsen, sons of the original patentee. He also acquired large tracts in various places, among which may be mentioned Dominies hook, in Newtown, purchased from the heirs of Amcke Jans, of Trinity Church notoriety. He lived in an old stone dwelling-house upon the farm, since of David Provoost, near the meadow on the east side of Greenpoint. This house and farm came into the possession of his daughter, Christina, wife of David Provoost, and was occupied by her during the summer months, she being a resident of the city of New York, until her death, about 1795. It was destroyed by fire in 1832 or '33, after which David Provoost, her great grandchild, and

the father of Hon. Andrew J. Provost, built the house now occupied by his son-in-law, J. W. Valentine, on its site.

Capt. Peter Praa died in 1740, and, by will, divided his property to his children; *Catharine*; *Maria*, who married Wynant Van Zandt, and died before her father, leaving two sons, Peter Praa and Johannes Van Zandt; *Elizabeth*, who married Jan Meserole (and to whom was devised all the tract purchased from Dirk Volkertsen); *Anna*, who married 1, William Bennett; 2d, Daniel Bordet, and received all the Dominies hook property in Newtown; and *Christina*, who married 1, David Provost; 2d, Rev. John Arounda, and who received property in the city of New York.

Two of Jan Meserole's sons, Jacob and Abraham, after the sale of the Keikont farm, removed to Greenpoint, where they settled on land which their father had purchased from Peter Praa. *Jacob* devised his share, by will, dated July 18, 1782, to his wife, for life, with remainder in fee to his sons, Peter and John; who, in 1791, made a division, Peter occupying the northerly half and John the southerly. *Abraham*, who died in 1801, was the father of John A. Meserole, who inherited the property on which he lived for many years, and died intestate, in 1833. One of his daughters, Mary, married Nezhiah Bliss, who resided upon this very property, to the time of his death, and in the old Meserole mansion, on the banks of the East River, which house has been recently enlarged and modernized. Thus by purchase, and through their mother, the greater part of the Praa estate came into possession of the Meserole family.

That portion granted by Praa to his daughter, Annetie Bodet, descended to her son, William Bennet, who died in possession, in 1805. It was by him devised to his sons, Tunis and Richard; and, in 1813, was sold at auction under foreclosure of mortgage, and purchased by Ammon T. Griffing. After his death, in 1814, it remained in possession of his heirs, until 1834, when it passed to Gen. Jeremiah Johnson, who, in 1835, conveyed it to Mr. Nezhiah Bliss, and he in 1835 and '42 transferred it to Eliphalett Nott, President of Union College.

Of the more modern history and progress of Greenpoint, the reader will be fully informed in a subsequent chapter.

"There were," says Mr. STEARNS in an article on this subject, "considerable tracts of land, to which neither patent nor possessory titles were acquired for many years after the settlement of the place. These lands were known as commons, and embraced several pieces of meadow on Newtown creek, and a space of land by Ninth street and North First and Second streets, in Williamsburgh, said to have been left open for the convenience of watering the cattle of the neighborhood, as it embraced a pond of fresh water that emanated from springs. This common embraced between one and two acres of land, and is mentioned in old deeds before the year 1700. A legal controversy concerning the title to this

common may be noticed hereafter. Besides, the meadow lands and the commons referred to, the town of Bushwick in the rights of all its several freeholders assumed to own the tract of land known as New Bushwick, embracing most of that part of the town south-east of the Cross roads, or the present Brooklyn and Newtown turnpike road.

"These New Bushwick lands were probably reservations for woodland, to supply the people with fuel, as old wills are found devising the right to cut and carry away fuel to burn, but not to sell, from parts of those lands claimed by the testators. The salt meadows that became, in separate parcels, appurtenances of the different homesteads in the town, were distributed at a much earlier date. Many of them were vested by the original patents, and all that were capable of use and improvement were made the means of sustaining the cattle of the earliest settlers through the severe winters of those times, before artificial grasses were cultivated on the uplands. Some portion of those meadows, however, were too sunken to be of use, being below the ordinary tides, and hence remained without a claimant, till they were sold by the towns of Williamsburgh and Bushwick."

**Civil History, 1660-1708.**—The scattered agricultural inhabitants of the territory now comprised in the eastern district of the city of Brooklyn, seem to have made no attempt towards a regular settlement, or the organization of a town government, for a period of over twenty years from the date of its purchase from the natives, by the West India Company. In February, 1660, the troublous times led to the enforcement, by the government, of stringent precautionary measures for the protection and safety of the established towns upon the western end of Long Island. "Outside residents, who dwell distant from each other," were directed also to "remove and concentrate themselves within the neighboring towns, and dwell in the same;" because, says the order, "we have war with the Indians, who have slain several of our Netherland people." A village and block-house was accordingly erected by the Waal-boght residents during the month of March, 1660, on the high point of land (Keikont) on the East River, near the foot of the present South Fourth street, before referred to.

Simultaneously, almost, the first steps were taken towards the establishment of a settlement in another and more remote portion of the territory. On the 16th of February, according to the record, "as fourteen Frenchmen, with a Dutchman, named Peter Jause Wit, their interpreter, have arrived here; and, as they do not understand the Dutch language, they have been with the Director-General and requested him to cause a town plot to be laid out at a proper place; whereupon his honor fixed upon the 19th instant to visit the place and fix upon a site."

Accordingly, three days after, on "February 19th, the Director-General, with the Fiscal, Niclaus de Sille and his Honor Secretary Van Ruyven with the sworn surveyor, Jacques Corteleau, came to Mispat [Mespith] and have fixed upon a place between Mispat kill [Newtown Creek] and Norman's kill [Bushwick Creek], to establish a village; and have laid out, by survey, twenty-two house lots, on which dwelling-houses are to be built."

March 7th, according to the record, "Evert Hedeman, having erected the first house, between William Traphagen and Knoet Mouris, near the pond, came to dwell in the same." Other houses were erected during the same year.

A year later, "March 14th, 1661, the Director-General visited the new village, when the inhabitants requested his honor to give the place a name; whereupon," taking his inspiration, no doubt, from its immediate surroundings, "he named the town *Boswijck*, i. e., the Town of Woods.

Application was then made and granted for certain town privileges. This application was signed by twenty-three men, viz.: Peter Janse Wit; Evert Hedeman; Jan Willemse Yselstyn; Jan Tilje; Ryck Leydecker; Hendrik Willenssen; Barent Gerritsen; Jan Hendricksen; Jan Cornelisen Zeenw; Barent Joosten; Francois de Puij; Johannes Casperse; Francisco de Neger; Pieter Lamot; Carel Fontyn; Henry —; Jan Catjouw; Jan Mailjaert; Hendrick Janse Grever; Gysbert Thonissen; Joost Casperse; Willem Traphagen; Dirck Volkertse.

The Governor also took occasion to call the attention of those living outside of the village to the great danger to which they were exposed, and to recommend their instant removal to the greater security now offered them by the erection of a number of neighboring dwellings. He, furthermore, commanded the villagers to nominate six of their number, from whom he would select three as magistrates for the town of Boswyck. The people, therefore, nominated six of the most prominent of their number, viz.: Gysbert Thonissen, Jan Catjouw, Ryck Leydecker, Peter Janse Wit, Jan Cornelis Zeenw and Jan Tilje, of whom the last three were selected by the Governor and confirmed as magistrates of Boswyck.

Boswyck, like New Utrecht, having no schout of its own, was subject to the jurisdiction of Hegeman, the schout of Breuckelen, Amersfoort and Midwout, and the district became thenceforth known as the Five Dutch Towns.

The village seems to have had a rapid accession of new settlers, for in May, 1661, we find the magistrates preferring a request for the grant of new lots and the establishment of roads.

On the 28th of December, following (1662), "the magistrates of the village of Boswyck, appeared before the council, representing that they in their village, were in great need of a person who would act as *clerk* and *schoolmaster* to instruct the youth; and, that, as one had been proposed to them, viz.: *Boudewyn Manout*, from Crimpen op de Leeuw [a village in Holland] they had agreed with him, that he should officiate as *roofsler* or clerk, and keep school for the instruction of the youth. For his [services] as clerk he was to receive 400 guilders in [wampum] annually; and, as schoolmaster, free house-rent and firewood. They therefore solicited, that their action in the matter might meet the approval of the Director General and Council in Nieuw-Nederland, and that the Council would also contribute something annually to facilitate the payment of the said salary."

The Council assented, and promised, that, after he had been duly examined and approved by the reverend ministers of the city, they would lighten the annual burden of the village by contributing annually, '25, heavy money.

Manout was afterwards appointed court clerk, upon which office he entered January 5, 1663. We present here a fac-simile, taken from the old Bushwick records,

of Manout's signature, curious for its combination of the date with the name.

It is noteworthy that, in December of this year, the Director and Council, hearing that Hendrick Barent Smith, "in contempt of the published and recently renewed orders," continued to reside "on his separated plantation in the neighborhood of Boswyck, to the detriment and injury of said village," ordered him to break up his building within twenty-four hours; and in case of his default, the magistrates were empowered to demolish it.

It appears from records that during the third year of the existence of the village, its prosperity was on the increase; for, on the 8th of February, 1663, the magistrates requested the Council to compel Jean Mailjaert, a Frenchman, to part with a few of his lots for the accommodation of new comers.

After a full hearing of the case, Jan Mailjaert, "as the welfare of the village of Boswyck requires it," was ordered to give up sufficient land for six lots, each lot being six rods broad, and five and a half rods long, on payment by the new comers of 25 guilders in seawant for each lot.

Amid the numerous evidences of increasing prosperity among the settlers of Boswyck, we must chronicle the gratifying and creditable fact that they voluntarily subscribed, March 30, 1662, the sum of forty-seven guilders, "to ransom Tunis Crayen's son Jacob, then a prisoner among the Turks."

On page 28 of the old Bushwick record, is the following muster-roll of officers and soldiers of the town in 1663: *Captain*, Ryck Lydecker (Schout); *Ensign*, Jan Tilje Casperse; *Secretary*, Boudwijn Manout; *Sergeant*, Evert Hedeman; *Corporals*, Pieter Jans Wit, Jan Hendricks, Alexander Conquerare; *Privates*, Gysbert Thonissen (Schepen), Barent Joost (Schepen), David Jochimsen, Hendrick Grever, Jan Mailjaert, Andries Barentse, Jan Parys, Evert Manritz, Charles Fountain, Jan Cornel Zeieuw, Corn. Janse Zeieuw, Joost Caspersen, Johannes Caspersen, Melle Caspersen, Francois de Puij, Jan Williams Esselstein, William Traphagen, Barent Gerretse; (*Drummer*), Dirck Volkertse, Volkert

Dirckse, Jan Botzer, Wessel Gerrits, Nicolaes Jones, Tunis Martin, Carel Carelsen, Claes Wolf, Wouter Gysbertsen, Jacob Gysbertsen, Caesar Barentse, Carel Reyekwyl, Francois d'Meyer, Antoin d'Meyer.

Thus quietly engaged in agricultural pursuits, the little community of Boswyck maintained the even tenor of its way, until disturbed, in 1663 and 1664, by the political excitements which preceded the conquest of New Netherland, by the English. Throughout those times, Boswyck remained loyal to the States-General.

At a meeting of the magistrates of most of the Dutch towns in the province, convened on the 1st of November, 1663, to discuss the condition and affairs of the country, Boswyck was represented by *Ryck Lydecker* and *Gysbert Tonissen*.

January, 1664. The Council received a petition from Abraham Jansen, carpenter, requesting permission to erect a mill near the village of Boswyck. He was required to appear, together with the magistrates of that village, before the Council, and explain as to the proposed location. They did so, on 1st of February, and the magistrates of the town, on being interrogated, expressed a cordial wish to have the water-mill erected on Mispit Kill, which was accordingly granted.

In February, 1664, William Traphagen, for insulting one of the magistrates of Bushwick, by calling him a false judge, was sentenced by the Governor and Council, to appear with uncovered head before the court of Bushwick, and, in the presence of the fiscal, to beg pardon of God, justice and the insulted magistrate; and to pay, in addition, thirteen guilders to the overseers of the poor of the town, with costs.

In May, of the same year, Jan Willemsen Van Iselsteyn, commonly called Jan of Leyden, for using abusive language and writing an insolent letter to the magistrates of Bushwick, was sentenced to be fastened to a stake at the place of public execution, with a bridle in his mouth, a bundle of rods under his arm, and a paper on his breast bearing the inscription: "Lampoon writer, false accuser and defamer of its magistrates." After this ignominy he was to be banished, with costs.

On the same day, William Jansen Traphagen, of Lenggo, for being the bearer of the above insolent letter to the magistrates of Bushwick, as well as for using very indecent language towards them, was also sentenced to be tied to the stake, in the place of public execution, with a paper on his breast, inscribed "Lampoon carrier." His punishment, also, was completed with banishment and costs.

Bushwick was represented in the General Assembly of April, 1664, by *Jan Van Cleef* and *Guisbert Tonissen*. Although English authority was distasteful to the inhabitants of the town, they submitted to it with characteristic Dutch apathy; but they soon found that the petulance of Stuyvesant was far preferable to the arbitrary rule of the English governors. But little of interest is to be found in the town records of Bushwick

at that period, except evidences of the arbitrary rule of the English colonial authorities.

*Jan Stuyker* and *Guisbert Tonissen* represented the town in the Hempstead Convention, at which the Duke's laws were promulgated.

Not only did Governor Nicols assume control of civil affairs in the town, but he issued orders regulating ecclesiastical matters; appointing clergymen, and prescribing the amount of salary to be paid by the town, and even designating the persons to assess and collect it.

Anno 1665, the 27th of December, the minister, who was sent to preach by the Hon. Gov. Richard Nicolls, preached his first sermon at the house of *Gysbert Tonissen*.

The name of the minister who preached the above mentioned "first sermon" is not given in the record; neither does it anywhere appear who his successors were, or whether they were Dutch, English or French. It probably is sufficient for us now, as it was for the good people of Boswyck in their day, to know that they were the governor's favored gentry, and probably in his interest.

It is hardly necessary to say that it was the Church of England which the governor thus sought to impose on the people of Bushwick.

But, though obliged to pay the taxes, they would not attend the preaching of the person so officiously thrust upon them, and finally he and his "Beloved Roger" were withdrawn. This attempt to force an established church upon the town of Bushwick, was felt to be a galling injustice, and finally, with other infractions, led to a public meeting of the people of the county, held at Flatbush, in 1664, whereat were passed several strongly-worded resolutions, condemnatory of the English, for their faithlessness in violating the conditions of the treaty, and in compelling them to litigate in a language which they did not understand. A significant expression of the feeling of the people on this point, is found in the fact that two cases then pending before the court of sessions, were withdrawn, and referred to arbitrators appointed by the meeting; the parties alleging that they were Dutchmen, "and did not wish to have their rights adjudicated by an English court." It was, also, agreed by the meeting, that they would have nothing to do with the courts, and that they would settle all differences in future by arbitration. The inhabitants thereafter adhered so strictly to these resolutions, that the courts were seldom occupied by civil causes, and usually adjourned on the first day. No lawyer resided in the county before 1783; and the Episcopal Church was not established here until 1776, during the occupation of the town by the British, during the Revolutionary war. The Dutch churches supported all the poor of the county; all who could labor being employed, and no poor-tax was raised in the county until the year 1785.

In February, 1687, Governor Dongan granted a pat-

ent to the town of Bushwick (given at length in STILES' *Hist. of Brooklyn*, pp. 345-380), conferring on it the usual corporate privileges of towns in those days, and accurately defining its boundaries. These boundaries *did not include* the site of the subsequent village of Williamsburgh. This probably arose, not from any oversight, but from the fact that the site of Williamsburgh was originally surveyed and owned by the Dutch West India Company.

The good people of Bushwick, in common with other towns, had suffered so long from the misrule of the bigoted Duke of York, James the II, that the news of his abdication, in 1688, and the succession to the English throne of his daughter Mary, and her husband William, Prince of Orange, was received with a general outburst of heartfelt joy.

The misguided zeal or ambition, however, of certain persons who were impatient of delay, defeated the designs of the new government, and involved the province in scenes of turmoil and strife.

Although the Dutch inhabitants of Bushwick generally were peacefully inclined, and patient under the arbitrary rule of the English governors, there were among them some who were less tractable; and occasionally instances of disorderly conduct are recorded—noticeably in 1693, 1694 and 1697.

“On the 20th of August, 1693, Jurian Nagell, of Bushwick, together with two others of Brooklyn, endeavored to stir up sedition among the crowd, who had assembled at a general training of the Kings County militia, on Flatland plains. Captain Jacques Cortelyou deposed before the Court of Sessions, that, ‘being in arms at the head of his company,’ he heard Nagell say to the people then in arms on said plains, in Dutch, these mutinous, factious and seditious words, following, viz.: ‘*Shien wij-der onder, wij seijn drie & een om?*’ in English: ‘Let us knock them down, we are three to their one.’ Nagell subsequently confessed his error, and was released with a fine.

The women, also, participated in the disorders of the times, for on the 8th of May, 1694, Rachel, the wife of John Luquier, and the widow Jonica Schamp, both of Bushwick, were presented before the court of sessions, for having, on the 24th of January previous, assaulted Capt. Peter Praa, and ‘teare him by the hair as he stood at the head of his company, at Boswyck.’ They, too, were heavily fined, and released after making due confession of their fault.”

The number of settlers in Bushwick during the Dutch Regime was probably less than twenty-five families, not exceeding a hundred people, including the fourteen French emigrants, that constituted the primary village. But thirty-three names were on the tax lists in the year 1703, over forty years after the English had possession of the country. Counting five to a family, would give a population of 165; which number was scarcely doubled at the beginning of the present century.

In 1706, the improved lands assessed in Bushwick, as then in fence, were as follows:

Hackert Hendrickse (widow), 186 acres; Peter Praa, 68; Humphrey Clay, 52; Peter de Wit's widow, 96; Charles

Fountain, 50; Tennis Wortman, 97; Francis Titus, 126; James Bobyne, 50; John Meseroll, 170; Jurian Nagell, 95; Cornelia Van Katts, 108; John Luquier, 108; John Luquier's Mill, 25; Philip Volkert's, 54; Peter Layston, 50; John Camp, 40; Jochem Verscheur, 60; Auck Hegeman, 40; Peter Williams, 60; Joost Dyeye, 107; Garret Cooke, 50; (Ja) Cobus Collier, 20; William West, 14; Derick Andriese, 14; Cornelius Laguson, 52; Hendrick Jansen, 54; Gysbert Bogert, 10; Dorothy Verscheur, 70; Gabon (or Galen) Laquill, 36; Ann Andriessen, 30; Gabriel Sprong, 16; Tennis Titus, 47; Hendrick De Forest, 14; Jacobus Jansen, 20; Charles Folkerts, 110; John Hendrick, 26; Frederic Symonds, 61; Philip Nagell, 13. Total acres, 2,443.

CHAS. L. FOUNTAINE, } Assessors.  
PETER PRAA, }  
PETER CORTILLEAU.—Survevor.

On the 12th of August, 1708, the town of Bushwick received from Gov. Cornbury, a new patent, confirmatory of that previously granted by Gov. Dongan.

During the administration of Lord Cornbury, the colony was called upon to exert all its energy in furnishing men, provisions and munitions of war, for the earlier colonial wars. In connection with this war, tradition has preserved a most romantic and touching episode, which occurred in the town of Bushwick.

A prominent young man named Peter Andriese was about to be married to the daughter of Jan Stryker, of Flatbush, when he was induced to enlist in the army. The entreaties of his friends, and of his intended bride, failed to dissuade him from his purpose, and he departed with his comrades. Days, months and years passed, his *fiancée* every hour expecting to hear of her betrothed, but in vain. At last, overcome by sorrow and hope deferred, death made her his victim; and on the very day of her burial, Andriese unexpectedly made his appearance in town. For years he had been a captive among a tribe of the Northern Indians, and had returned too late.

**Ecclesiastical History—1700 to 1824.**—In the absence of any ecclesiastical records, there is no evidence of the organization of a church, or the erection of a house of worship, in this town, prior to the commencement of the last century.

Mr. STEARNS thus remarks:

“Coming out of a storm of papal persecution, in their Fatherland, the settlers of Boswyck brought with them a high religious purpose to sustain the integrity of their religious professions in this land of their adoption. But, they soon came in contact with the calculating political policy of the Dutch governors and the West India Company, to subordinate religion to the control and profit of the government. The laws enacted by Stuyvesant in 1656, against *conventicles*, show the temper of the Dutch Government—‘That no person should exercise the office of a religious teacher, unless his credentials were issued by the civil authority.’ The Reformed Religion as settled by the Synod of *Dordrecht* (Dort) was made the only religion to be publicly taught. Lutherans with the others were forbidden free public worship. And the settlement of *Quakers* and *vagabonds*, in the Province, without previous permission, was prohibited. With such conservative supervision, it is not singular, that the volatile French settlers of Boswick found few inducements to a religious

faith, whose services, if held at all, were conducted in a language they did not understand. And, while it was an offense, to be punished by the magistrate, if they met to compare views and instruct each other in religion, as they had learned it in France, it is not singular that religion degenerated among this handful of people; so that, for near forty years, after the settlement of the town, no church seems to have existed in any form of visible organization. The Dominies from Brooklyn and Flatbush occasionally visited the place, and 'comforters of the sick' visited the families and officiated at burials, from time to time. But this remote town realized more severely than other places, the general poverty of religious privileges, prevailing in all the New Netherlands. The half-dozen religious teachers of the Reformed faith in all the province, seemed especially jealous of their faith or denominational interests, to the extent of sanctioning the acts of religious persecutions, inaugurated by the government. They had neither the numbers nor the facilities for the religious teaching of the people; and yet they were so fearful of *conventicles*, or their fanaticisms, that they would constrain the people to a semi-heathenism, instead of allowing them any scope for personal inquiry and social worship. For all the forty years after the settlement of the town, there is scarcely a way-point of religious interest in its history. If preaching they occasionally had, in the town-house or private dwellings, it was doubtless of a stiff, unyielding character, more theological than religious, more dogmatical than sympathetic, more speculative than practical. The few lights from the Holland schools came to demonstrate their pedantry among these remote people of the border, rather than to instruct their hearts in the duty and peace of love to God."

"A part of the communion service still in use," says PRIME, "bears the date of 1708, from which it is inferred that the church was formed about that time. There is also a receipt extant, for a church bell, dated in 1711, which renders it probable that the house of worship had been erected not long before." This edifice was octagonal in form, with a very high and steep pyramidal roof, terminating in an open cupola or belfry, the whole greatly resembling a haystack. Externally, being constructed of frame work, it was diminutive and rustic in aspect. Internally, it was a mere inclosure, without pews or gallery, till near the close of the century; the congregation furnishing themselves with benches or chairs. In 1790, the building received a new roof; and, in 1795, a front gallery was erected, and the ground floor furnished with pews. It was taken down in 1840.

The people of Bushwick constituted a part of the Collegiate church of the county, and, as such, were ministered to by the pastors of the Five Dutch towns. According to the preceding dates, of course, Messrs. Freeman and Antonides were the first pastors, and preached here alternately every third Sabbath. There is still extant a receipt from the former, for salary, in 1709.

In 1787, the Rev. *Peter Looze* was installed here as collegiate pastor with the Rev. Martinus Schoonmaker, who resided at Flatbush. Having withdrawn from the oversight of this church to the exclusive charge of the associate churches of Flatbush and Flatlands, he closed his labors here in the year 1808. He was succeeded in

1811 by the Rev. Dr. *John Bassett*, a native of Bushwick, where he was born, October 1st, 1764; and a man of extraordinary erudition. He was an excellent Hebrew scholar, as is attested by the fact that he was, in 1797, appointed by the General Synod of the Reformed Protestant Dutch church, to fill a professor's chair in Queen's (now Rutgers') College, New Brunswick, N. J., which position he held for many years. During this period he engaged the services of a colleague, Rev. John Barent Johnson, likewise a native of Kings county, who was installed in 1796, and who subsequently became the pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church of Brooklyn. He was, also, a thorough classical scholar, and generally had several young men in his family and enjoying his instruction. Although not gifted with great powers of imagination or eloquence, he was a sound and edifying preacher; and the history of Brooklyn during the war of 1812, attests his fervent and lofty patriotism. It may be further mentioned as a proof of his ability, that being equally familiar with the Dutch, as with the English language, he undertook the translation of *Voorhelm's History of New Netherland*, for publication; but by some means the manuscript was lost, and the task was subsequently repeated by the late Gen. Jeremiah Johnson. Mr. Bassett, in 1824, was suspended from the ministry for intemperance, and died on 4th of February of that year.

**During the Revolutionary War.**—The Revolutionary history of the town is by no means so interesting as that of its neighbor, Brooklyn; and its revolutionary spirit, outspoken and free at first, was, like that of Brooklyn, also, quickly nipped in the bud by the disastrous result of the battle of Long Island, in August, 1776. Previous to that event, during the year 1775, the popular sentiment and action was at once loyal and energetic in behalf of the American cause. Bushwick was then represented in the First New York Provincial Congress, and also, at the subsequent sessions of the same body, in '75 and '76; and at the conventions of the State in 1776 and '77, by Mr. Theodorus Polhemus; and many of her prominent citizens, such as Ab'm Ranst, Ab'm Luquere, John Titus, Joost Durycan, Alexander Whaley and others, were foremost in all county and local action which was calculated to advance the interests of their country. At the battle of Brooklyn, and in the retreat which followed, Bushwick was represented by a militia company under command of Capt. John Titus. Also, in a list of officers chosen by the different companies in Kings County, who have signed the Declaration, and taken their commission, we find among the Light Horse, Jacob Bloom, 2d Lieutenant; and Peter Wykoff, *Quarter-Master*; Ab'm Van Ranst, 1st Lieutenant; Peter Colyer, 2d Lieutenant; John Skillman, *Ensign*. Wm. Van Cott, of Bushwick, shot a British officer who was engaged in reconnoitering the American lines on Fort Putnam, and then put up his gun, saying he had done his part for that day.

**Bushwick During the British Occupation, 1776-1780.**—After that unfortunate battle, the town was subjected to all the inconveniences and evils of an armed occupation. In November, 1776, a regiment of Hessians, under Col. Rahl, had their winter quarters here, and constructed barracks on the land then belonging to Abraham Luquere; the timber for said barracks being taken with military freedom, from the Wallabout swamp. Many of the troops were also billeted on the inhabitants. The leading patriots were either in active service, or had been obliged to leave their homes and estates to the tender mercies of the invaders; and, in some cases, to confiscation. Their families were subjected to the arbitrary authority of British officials, and to the insults or depredations of the soldiery who were quartered upon them. Their woodlands, brush-wood and fencing were rapidly appropriated to camp uses, their teams impressed into the king's service, and, in many ways, they were made to feel the power of their conquerors.

Of the auxiliary troops of the British army, Gen. Jonsson's *Manuscript Recollections of the Revolution* says: "Col. Rahl took up his quarters in Bushwick, with a regiment of Hessians. They constructed barracks on the land of Abraham Luquere, although many of them were also quartered on the inhabitants. The regiment of Col. Rahl made free use of the wood in the Wallabout swamp, which extended along north of the Cripplebush road, from the bay to Newtown creek." In the humane treatment of the conquered enemy, the Hessian soldiers, after they became acquainted with the people of the island, would compare with the British, much to the disadvantage of the latter. The testimony of the prisoners of the Wallabout prison ships is often highly creditable to their humanity. They had first, however, to be disabused of the conviction so craftily impressed by the British, of the barbarity and savage cruelty of the Americans. But their cupidity and proneness to commit petty robberies (appropriating every species of property upon which they could, without much personal risk, lay their hands) has begot for them the reputation of arrant thieves. "It was seldom, however," says FIELD, "that they wantonly injured the property of others, as they did in the case of Hendrick Suydam, situated upon what was then known as New Bushwick lane (now Evergreen avenue, in the Eighteenth ward) which connected the Jamaica turnpike with the Cripplebush road to Newtown. His house, which still stands, is a venerable and well preserved specimen of Dutch architecture, the lower story built of stone of sufficient thickness, almost, to serve for the walls of a fortress; and lighted by small windows with long panes of glass set in heavy sash, which give it a quaint air of peering through spectacles. Its walls, according to the traditions of the family, were erected not less than one hundred and sixty years ago, and the house was located (according to the invariable practice of the

old Holland settlers), in a little hollow where it would be protected from the sweep of the dreaded north wind. The airy sites and broad prospect, which so entice the occupants of Brooklyn soil, had no attractions for the phlegmatic and comfort-loving Dutch race. The old farmers quietly hid their houses away in the little valleys and turns of the road, much as a cautious fowl creeps into a hedge and constructs its nest for a long incubation. Hendrick Suydam, like his brother, the stout Lambert Suydam of Bedford, captain of the Kings County troop of horse, was a sound whig; though compelled, from his situation in the midst of the British camp, to take the oath of allegiance or suffer the confinement of a fetid and infected prison, with numbers of his Bushwick neighbors. He could not, however, obtain his freedom from an infection scarcely less pestiferous than the other alternative, the lodgment, in his house, of a squad of Hessian soldiers. So filthy were their habits, that, in the summers succeeding their occupancy of the houses of Bushwick, Brooklyn and Flatbush, where they had been quartered, a malignant fever ensued, which carried off numbers of the inhabitants. In consequence of their peculiar habits, so abhorrent to the fastidious neatness of the Dutch, these Hessians were termed the Dirty Blues. During the occupation of the Suydam house, a Hessian captain, for want of other occupation, or possibly to spite his Dutch host, chopped with his sword several large pieces from one of the side posts of the doorway. As a memento of the old troublous times, and to keep green the memory of the wrongs which so deeply embittered him, the old whig would never permit the defacement to be repaired. With true Dutch pertinacity, in the same humor, his descendants have very commendably preserved the tokens of the detested occupation of their domicile by a foreign enemy, and the marks of the Hessian sword are still apparent."

The greatest trouble experienced by the farmers during the war, was from the Tories, or cow-boys, who were amenable to no law, and influenced by no motives of humanity or honesty. Old Mrs. Meserole, who lived on Greenpoint, used often to say that, though residing alone with a young family around her, she was never molested by the British officers, or their men; but she lived in constant dread of the Tories.

Rappelje's tavern, at the Cross-roads, was the favorite rendezvous of these robbers; and, as long as they infested the towns, there was no quiet or safety in the land. After the British left the country, they disappeared, many of them going to Nova Scotia.

A battalion of guides and pioneers, composed of three companies, were quartered in the town of Bushwick, from 1778 until November, 1783. They were a set of notorious villains, collected from almost every part of the country, and organized under the command of Captains Melpherson, Williams, Van Allen and Purdy. Williams and Purdy were from Westchester



county, Van Allen from Bergen county, N. J., and McPherson from the south. This command supplied the British army with guides and spies for every part of the country; and, whenever an expedition was organized to attack any place, drafts were made on this battalion. After the peace, these men dared not remain in this country, and were not wanted in Britain. Nova Scotia was their only place of refuge, and thither they went, where proper provision was made for them by the British authorities.

After the provisional treaty of peace, these guides returned to quarters at Bushwick. They numbered about one hundred and fifty under command of Capt. McPherson, and were encamped on the farm of Abm. Van Ranst, then an exile. The dwelling, which stood about one hundred and fifty yards northward from the Bushwick church, was occupied by the captain himself, who kept a guard of honor, and a sentinel constantly stationed at his door. In this connection we may relate the following anecdote, as given in the *Manuscript Recollections of Gen. JOHNSON*:

"In the month of August, 1788, on a fine evening, seven young whigs were together along the shore opposite to Corlears hook, the tide being then quite high. Two British long-boats had drifted on the shore, where they had lain for some time. It was proposed to take the boats up Bushwick creek and lay them on the meadow of John Skillman, as prizes, which was forthwith done. A few days afterwards, in the month of September, several of the party, being at the Fly Market in New York, were told that Capt. McPherson had caused the boats to be removed to his house, and had purchased paint and other material with which to put the boats in order for his own use. It was immediately resolved to remove the boats, that night, from the captain's quarters. A gallon of shrub, some crackers and a salmon were purchased for the expedition, a small bill on John Skillman's land was designated as the place of rendezvous, and nine o'clock was named as the hour. Three of the party brought up a boat with oars to row away the boats with; and, at the appointed hour, the whole party, consisting of William Miller, Joseph and Francis Skillman, John Bogart, John Conselyea, Francis Titus and the writer, were assembled at the appointed place. It was a beautiful moonlit evening and the soldiers were playing about the fields. The little party of whigs regaled themselves with their provisions, until about ten o'clock, when two of their number ventured to reconnoitre, and returned with the report that the boats lay near the house, that a party were dancing and frolicking there, and a sentinel was at the door. Meanwhile, a dark cloud was rising in the west, foreboding a violent storm. It came on, and then we went, took up the boats, carried them over a stone wall, and dragging them about one hundred and fifty yards, launched them into Skillman's creek. When we took the boats the sentinel at the door had deserted his post; we found a fine marquee pitched near by, which was trembling in the rising storm. I cut a few *sky-lights* in the top, and then severing the weather braces, which sang like fiddle strings, it fell prostrate. So violent was the lightning and rain, that we did not see a living person, besides ourselves, before we were out of Bushwick creek with the boats, which we took up the river to John Miller's, opposite Blackwell's island, and left them in his barn, returning to Francis Titus's in our boat, at sunrise. In passing down Bushwick

creek, one of our prizes filled with water, but we did not abandon her. On our arrival at the mouth of the creek, the storm was over, the moon shone brightly again, and we were hailed by a sentinel who threatened to fire upon us, to which we answered roughly, and passed on our way.

"The next day all Bushwick was in an uproar. The Yankees were charged with infringing the treaty of peace; the sentinels and guards who lay in Mr. Skillman's barn, within fifty yards of the place where the boats were lunched, were charged with unwatchfulness. It was not known who took the boats, before November 25, 1783. The act was caused by the feeling of resentment which the whole party had against Captain McPherson. He was a bad man, and when his soldiers were accused by neighbors with thefts, and other annoyances, retorted upon their accusers with foul language, etc."

Mr. WM. O'GORMAN, in his admirable antiquarian sketches, in the *Long Island Weekly Star*, under date of October 8, 1880, says: "The old Skillman House, which may be considered to have been the headquarters of the expedition, is still standing, in Frost street, between Lorimer and Union avenue. Its exterior is altered from the old Dutch pattern to modern shape, but the interior is characteristic of the first settlement. Thirty years since the eye of the tourist often took pleasure in viewing the fine old house of former days, standing as it then did on a grassy knoll well planted with large trees. At that period the spring tides used to cover the marsh up to the garden of the house; and, by sunset at such times the landscape shone with the splendor of primitive time. But sad is the change for the landscape; more or less the salt meadows are being filled in and the spring-tides visit it no more. The back of the house now fronts on the street, and the old hall door (in two sections) now guards the rear entrance. Of the Van Ranst homestead nothing remains but the foundations, still to be seen on lots Nos. 245 and 247 Withers street, near Kingsland avenue, five blocks away from the Skillman House. The headquarters of McPherson and his spy-battalion were, until their removal two years since, the guard-lodge of the Cannon Street Baptist Cemetery."

Upon the occasion of the evacuation of the city of New York by the British army, and its occupation by the Americans, November 25th, '83, a number of the inhabitants of Bushwick met and appointed December 2d, as the day, and the banks of the East river, in full view of the city, as a place of rejoicing, and sent an address and invitation to Washington, who returned a courteous reply—given at length, in STILES' *History of Brooklyn*.

Among the patriots of Bushwick, we may here record the names of *John Provost* (grandfather of Hon. A. J. Provost), who escaped the pursuit of a detachment of British soldiers on Greenpoint, and was obliged to secrete himself for three days in Cripple-bush swamp; during which time he sustained life by milking the cows which pastured there; of *John A. Meserole*, who was taken and confined in the Pro-

vost jail at New York; of *John I. Meserole* who was mistaken for John A., while out gunning in a skiff, and arrested as a spy, but subsequently released; and of *Abraham Meserole*, another member of the same family who was in the American army. *Jacob Van Cott* and *David Miller* were also in the service, and taken prisoners. *William Conselyea* was taken during the war, and hung over a well and threatened in order to make him confess where his money was; *Nicholas Wyckoff* was engaged in vidette duty with a troop of horse; and *Alexander Whaley* was one of those decided characters of whom we should be glad to learn more than we have been able to ascertain, in spite of much inquiry and research. He was a blacksmith, residing at the Bushwick Cross Roads, on land forming a part of Abraham Rapalye's forfeited estates, and which he purchased at the commissioners' sale, March 21, 1785. (Liber vi, *Convey. Kings Co.*, 345). The building which Mr. Whaley occupied was erected by himself, on the south side of the present Flushing avenue, his liberty-sign pole rising from a little knoll some twenty feet west of the house. His blacksmith-shop was on the site of the present house, east of the old Whaley house. He died at Bushwick, in February, 1833, in the eighty-eighth year of his age. Bold, faithful, and patriotic, and odd withal, he made his mark upon the day and generation in which he lived. His obituary notice (all too brief) says that "he was one of the pioneers of American liberty; being one of those who assisted in throwing the tea overboard in Boston harbor. He was the confidential friend of Washington, and in all the relations of life he always did his duty."

Several estates were confiscated, among which were those of *Williams, Rapalye* and others; the owners finding it convenient to go to Nova Scotia.

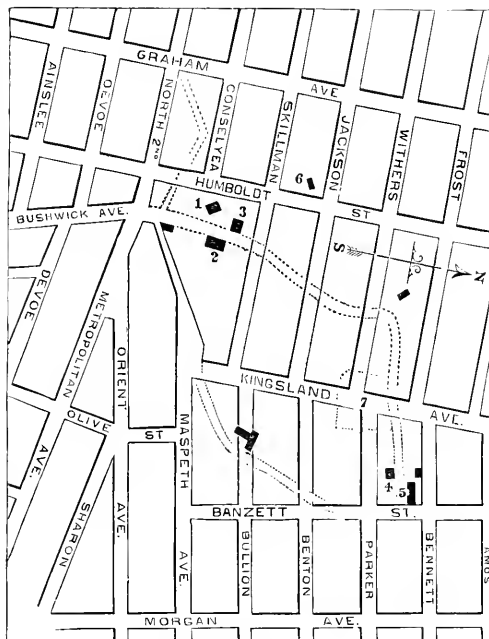
Although opposite political opinions were frequently entertained by different members of the same families, it is worthy of remark that they always acted honestly towards one another. Though a great number of the inhabitants of Bushwick were whigs, the royalists even were men of peaceable character and integrity. This fact, as recorded by a venerable eye witness of the Revolution, speaks volumes in favor of the ancestry of Bushwick.

**Bushwick, from the Close of the Revolution to 1854.**—There were in Bushwick, at the close of the Revolution, three distinct settlements, or centres of population, each retaining its old Dutch name, and very much of its old Dutch quaintness of appearance. These were *het dorp*, the town plot, first laid out by Gov. Peter Stuyvesant, in 1661, at the junction of North Second street and Bushwick avenue; *het Kieis padt*, since known as the Cross roads, at the crossing of the present Bushwick avenue and the Flushing road; and *het strand*, or the strand, along the East river shore.

*Het Dorp*, or the town plot of Bushwick, was the

centre of town life, towards which all the principal roads of the settlement verged; and, in every direction, as the citizen receded from it, he receded from civilization.

MAP D.



HET DORP, OR BUSHWICK GREEN.

- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. Bushwick Church.                                  | 4. Devoe Houses.    |
| 2. Town-House.                                       | 5. Conselyea House. |
| 3. School House.                                     | 6. Conselyea House. |
| 7. Old Bushwick graveyard, indicated by dotted line. |                     |

The remains of ancient Bushwick, says the *Newtown Anti-quary*, Mr. WM. O'GORMAN, "cluster around the Dutch Reformed Church on the confines of North Second and Humboldt streets, Brooklyn, E. D., where the animosity of Governor Stuyvesant planted them in 1661, to gratify his hatred against the English Kills of Newtown. On March 14th, 1661, he probably emerged from the old Conselyea House on Humboldt street—an irascible old man that he was—supporting a heavy dinner on his historic wooden leg, rather unsteadfast from heavy lager, and pronounced and christened the new village 'Boswick,' which the moderns have made Bushwick, the Low Dutch name for 'heavy woods.' The venerable homestead of the *Conselyea* family stands angleways to Humboldt street; with its front looking, as of yore, on old Bushwick Church, its rear to Jackson street. It is worth a visit. Part of the building has been lately cut away. The last occupant of the name was 'Aunt Katty,' widow of And'w J. Conselyea. She died in 1873, and the family of Conselyea departed with her coffin through the old portals of the homestead, never to return. A writer of that day thus describes the rooms left vacant: 'The window sills are of sufficient capacity to seat three men comfortably, and are each one foot in depth; the window sashes are the same as were originally placed here, with nine small 6x7 panes of glass in each sash.

The ceiling of this room is particularly worthy of notice. It is supported by five ponderous beams that measure  $14\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$  inches in thickness, and are twenty feet long. They are painted brown, and give the room rather a gloomy appearance. The flooring is of boards that are 17 inches in width, and these broad boards always mark a house as very ancient. The old cupboard of 150 years ago was removed to Jamaica, and is now preserved in the house of John Conselyea, of that township; it was and is yet an ornamental piece of furniture."

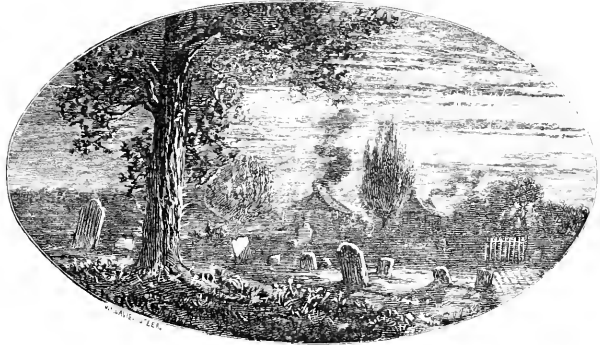
The old Bushwick church was an octagonal edifice, standing on the site of, and facing the same way as the present one. Its portrait will be found in the *Ecclesiastical History of Kings County*. The wrinkled and homely old one-story town-house, and the school-house on the opposite side of the Wood-point road, which leads from the church to a point of woods on the meadows, near Van Cott and Mecker avenues; the group of one-story Dutch cottages, with their long curved sloping roofs, marking the entrance of *Kye-kout hunc*, which connected Bushwick church with Kye-kout or Lookout point, on the East river, crossing Grand street near Tenth; all these formed a scene of primitive Dutch life, exceedingly attractive from its simplicity and almost grotesque quaintness. And, so it remained until 1835. In 1840, the old church (Map v, Fig. 1), was replaced by the present edifice. In 1846, Maspeth avenue was opened to Newtown, and several houses erected upon it, this side of the creek. The old town-house yet stands (Map v, Fig. 2), and around it centre the memories of the ancient, civil, ecclesiastical and educational glories of Bushwick. In front of it (or more probably of its predecessor), contumacious John of Leyden was exposed to the public gaze, ignominiously tied to a stake, with a horse-bridle in his mouth, a bundle of rods under his arm and a label on his breast, stating that he was a writer of lampoons, etc. Here, too, a thief was once punished by being made to stand under a gallows, with a rope around his neck and an empty sword scabbard in his hand; and here, also, saddest sight of all, a venerable clergyman of the town, who had incautiously married a couple without observing the formalities demanded by the law, was condemned to flogging and banishment; a sentence, however, which, in consideration of his gray hairs, was commuted to that of exile from the town.

"Long after the Revolution, the old town-house continued to be the high seat of justice, and to resound with the republican roar of vociferous electors on town meetings days. The first Tuesday in April, and the fourth of July, in each succeeding year, found *het-dorp* (now Anglicized to Bushwick Church), suddenly metamorphosed from a sleepy little Dutch hamlet into a brawling, swaggering country town, with very de-

bauched habits. Our Dutch youth had a most enthusiastic tendency and ready facility in adopting the convivial customs and uproarious festivity of the loud-voiced and arrogant Anglo-American youngsters. One day the close-fisted electors of Bushwick devised a plan for easing the public burden, by making the town-house pay part of the annual taxes; and, accordingly, it was rented to a Dutch publican, who afforded shelter to the justices and constables, and by his potent liquors contributed to furnish them with employment. In this mild partnership, so quietly aiding to fill each other's pockets, our old friend Chris. Zimmerman had a share until he was ousted, because he was a better customer than landlord. At last the electors of Bushwick grew tired of keeping a hotel, and sold the venerable structure to an infidel Yankee, at whose bar the good dominie could no longer feel free to take an inspiring cup before entering the pulpit; and the glory of the town-house of Bushwick departed." (FIELD).

The school-house which stood near (Map v, Fig. 3), was occupied by a district school until within a few years past—latterly under the charge of the Board of Education.

In sight of the church, and covering the present

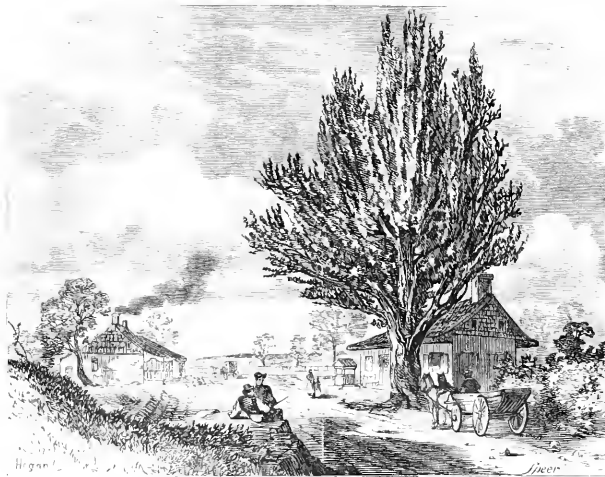


OLD BUSHWICK GRAVEYARD.

junction of Parker street and Kingsland avenue, was the ancient graveyard of the original Dutch settlement, for many years unused and its few remaining monuments neglected, broken and almost indecipherable. In 1879, Isaac De Bevoise, grandson of Isaac, who was here buried, undertook the pious duty of removing such remains as were left. He collected seven large casket-boxes of bones, whose identification was impossible; besides a few remains which were identified by neither coffin-plates or headstone. He estimated them at 250 skeletons, and he remarked that all had sound teeth—save the one tooth which used to hold the Dutch pipe. The work of removal was done at the expense of the old families, under the direction of the Consistory of the Church; and the boxes are deposited under Bushwick Church. The few inscriptions in this

old burial-place have been preserved by STILES, in *Hist. of Brooklyn*, ii. 374; and by Town-Clerk WM. O'GORMAN, in the *L. I. City Weekly Star*, Dec. 31, 1880.

From the old burying-ground, and looking along the old Woodpoint road, the two venerable De Voë houses might be seen (Map D, 4 and 5), standing (on either side the old road) between Parker and Bennett streets, near De Bevoise avenue. They are well depicted in the accompanying sketch taken in the fall of 1867.



THE DE VOË HOUSES, AS SEEN FROM THE OLD GRAVEYARD.

On De Bevoise avenue was the old De Bevoise house, later known as the residence of Charles I. De Bevoise. Here, again, we must let our Newtown friend, Town-Clerk WM. O'GORMAN describe:

"The 'Manor House' on Meeker Avenue is a good point to stroll from, when historically inclined, towards old Bushwick township. Here wound its way the Woodpoint road to the old town dock; and here, within sight of each other on opposite sides of Meeker Avenue, are the Wyckoff and DeBevoise homesteads. Each of them has its history, antedating the Declaration of Independence by many years. But each house has likewise a middle history, connecting the past generation with the present by two living and hearty links. \* \* \* In the Manor house we see the birth-place of Nicholas Wyckoff, President of the First National Bank. He was Supervisor of Bushwick town. Step across Meeker Avenue, and on the edge of the open lots stands the old DeBevoise house. Charles I. DeBevoise was born in that house, and he too became a Supervisor of Bushwick township. We believe they are the only representatives of Bushwick now remaining.

"Bushwick, from its birth under the old Dutch Governor Stuyvesant, was a lively little township, and much prone to irritate her neighbors. In fact she was a thin wedge driven from Greenpoint to the ocean, right through the extremities of several sleepy towns; and, as her humor was, she constantly kept one or other of them awake. The Supervisor of

little Bushwick of that date must be active, of an aggressive turn of mind, but withal good-humored, and endowed with the vitality of perfect health. These were the *sine-qu-nons* demanded of all candidates in her elections: which were a species of Olympic games once a year to her.

"The competitors were many, and to be successful was esteemed of great honor. Charles I. DeBevoise and Nicholas Wyckoff bore off these honors in their day. In their stock of health they out-distanced all competitors. It is doubtful if either of them has lost a tooth—they are neither of them venerable—they are merely men containing some eighty years of accurate recollections and of the best health. This represents their physical condition, the only province of the tourist. Their reputation as citizens is known of all." [Mr. Wyckoff died while these pages were passing through the press.—Editor.]

"The 'Wyckoff House' was erected by Theodorus Polhemus, of Flatbush, who married Anna Brinckerhoff here, and here settled. He afterwards became the chosen representative of Bushwick in the Congress and Conventions, from 1775 to 1777. He died in 1781, and after Independence his children sold out to Peter Wyckoff, the father of the President of the First National Bank. But the Wyckoffs still held, and still do hold, their ancestral farm on the boundary-line between Brooklyn and Newtown, beyond Metropolitan Avenue. The ex-Supervisor resided there; while the Polhemus-Wyckoff estate, with its old house, has passed to the stranger."

Of the genealogies and romances of the *Polhemus* and connected families of *Schencks*, *Rikers*, *Remsens* and *Larramores*, the TOWN-CLERK discourses most genially and instructively.

"Thirty years since and the Manor House grounds on Meeker Avenue presented a Baronial appearance; the Wyckoff woods and the Wyckoff-Polhemus house had retained all its companion trees, barns and out-houses. Two immense poplars stood sentries at the gate on the Woodpoint road; they have yielded to time, and are no more. In the last stages of their decay, our thoughts often reverted to the times when the Bushwick farmers carried their produce to the old town-dock past the same trees and watched the growth of the young saplings newly planted.

Thirty years ago, and nothing was disturbed along the Woodpoint road, on its way to the town-dock of Bushwick; but, in 1880, all is uprooted, and the town-dock itself and its tide-water are traversed over by the horse-cars. The spectators of the old poplars never dreamt of such changes: but the Wyckoff house is now, as ever, a farm-house.

The DeBevoise house is also on the old Woodpoint road; and, for generations, was the homestead of the DeBevoise family, of Bushwick, descended from Carel DeBevoise, the Huguenot, who became the first school-teacher and town-clerk of Brooklyn. It still belongs to Charles I. DeBevoise, and in that house he was born, and there, too, he was married—once, if not twice; and we believe history records that his father, Isaac DeBevoise, did also endure similar experience of these changes in life. The ex-Supervisor resides in the large mansion adjoining the old house, nor have his eyes ever failed, for upwards of eighty years, to rest on the place

of his nativity—which circumstance is rather a unique experience of constancy in this our land of change. The Schenck family, of Brooklyn, are closely entwined with these DeBevoises, of Bushwick; in proof of which, on a window of the old house, remains the name of a bride from that family, cut on her wedding-day, immediately before she had assumed her new name of DeBevoise. The fifth generation are now represented in continuous residence from Carel DeBevoise, of 1736, who was a farmer, and the first of the name in Bushwick, to Charles I., and his son, Isaac DeBevoise; and, still later, to a six-year old boy, the son of this last Isaac.

The barn of the DeBevoise house is precisely as the Hessians of General Rahl had left it—warm and comfortable in a plentiful neighborhood, which these warriors of so much per head soon learned to appreciate and fully to enjoy. To the sound of the drum they trampled down, in 1776, a new clay floor; and, this accomplished, they eat, drank and smoked out their long occupation. Of the English tongue, they learned but little from the natives of Bushwick, who, indeed, knew little of it themselves; all spoke in Dutch, and in secret they cleaved together until the war was over. Few of them returned to Europe; many remained in Bushwick; Louis Warner, who lived near Cooper's glue factory, Hendrick Plaus, and Christopher Zimmerman, who, for many years, was miller at Luque's mill, were of this number, and are yet well remembered. The Prince of Hesse made money by their absence; a Hessian lost to him was a clear gain—such being the terms of bargain and sale of that Princely Potentate with Royal George III., of England. It was a glorious bargain for all parties, save to King George, who had to pay expenses."

On Bushwick avenue, near the north-east corner of that avenue and North Second street, was the old L-shaped house, now used as a grocery-store; and several other old houses long remained in the immediate neighborhood of the church. North-west of the church and close to Bushwick creek was the residence of Abram Van Rans, a lieutenant of the Kings County Militia, who fled, with his family, to Harlem, at the time of the battle of Brooklyn. His house became the headquarters of Mr. Pershon's corps of refugees and Tories.

*Het Kivis Padt*, or the Cross-roads, on Bushwick avenue, between Johnson and Adams streets, long retained several of the old houses which clustered there in the olden time.

The inhabitants residing along the water-side (*Het Strand* of the olden day) at the close of the Revolution, were Martin Kershow, David Miller, Charles Titus, Andrew Conselyea, Thomas Skillman, Francis Titus, William Bennett and John Titus. Speaking of the Titus family, JOHN M. STEARNS, Esq., says:

"But as we passed northerly along the shore, we came to an ancient tavern, since fronting on First street, just south of Grand, on land conveyed to Francis Titus by Isaac Meserole, prior to 1758. By whom this celebrated public house, known for generations as the '*Fountain Inn*,' was built, I do not know. Its site was devised by Francis Titus to his son, Charles, who was known as 'old 'Charlun Titus,' and who kept this place for many years. Of a Saturday night, the settlers usually gathered around its bar, and contributed to a weekly carousal, and bacchanal songs, such as should have startled the sensibilities of a Christian people.

As a general result, in less than half a century, three-fourths of the farms in town had changed hands through the ruin wrought by the influence of the Fountain Inn. Passing this noted inn, our pathway leads past the old Titus Homestead, where the Francis Tituses, for three generations, lived and died. Here we pause to relate an incident illustrative of human gratitude and human selfishness. Tunis Mauritiz Covert died at Monmouth, N. J., seized of the land since known as the old Titus Homestead, many years previous to 1719. Francis Titus had married his widow, and brought up his children. The eldest son, Tunis Covert, under the laws then prevailing, was the sole heir of this farm, to the exclusion of all his father's younger children. On the 16th of May, 1719, this Tunis Covert makes a deed of this farm to Francis Titus, his '*loving father-in-law*,' for his care and expense in bringing up the grantor and his father's other children; and then described the home and farm as occupied by the grantee, containing fifty-eight acres, &c. This land continued in the possession of Titus for over thirty years, but the generous step-son was not remembered in the step-father's will, made some thirty years afterwards. Devising a large estate to the testator's own children, to wit: Francis, Charles, Jan, Johannes and Titus Titus, and charging thereon legacies to his daughters, Antie, Helena, Elizabeth, Janetje, Hyeotte and Christina, reserving an estate for life or during widowhood, to his wife, Elizabeth—yet, his step-children are all forgotten; and this Elizabeth he turns out to poverty if she marries again. The step-son, who generously gave up his estate, an inheritance from his ancestors, received not even an honorable mention when the recipient of his beneficence made his last earthly preparation for his death-bed.

Pursuing our way along the East River shore, we come to the old homestead of the *Wartmans*, who, for nearly a hundred years, had an honorable name among the denizens of Bushwick, and only ceased to be mentioned as leading citizens about 1780. This old homestead is now represented by a more modern domicile near Bushwick creek and Second street, on property now of General Samuel I. Hunt. The farm originally had ninety-six acres, some forty acres of the western part having passed to one William Laytin, and by him was sold to Francis Titus, mentioned above. The remainder was owned by one William Bennett, and was devised by him to his son William, as to the northwestern part, and to Jacob Bennett, as to the southeasterly part. The former passed to William Vail, and through him to the wife of Samuel I. Hunt; the latter was afterward known as the farm of Frost, O'Haudy, Butler and Sinclair."

Subsequently, but prior to 1798, were erected the houses of Peter Miller and Frederic Devoe. In 1798, also, William Van Cotts resided at the Sweeney's Fly. One by one, however, these old farm-houses have disappeared before long rows of modern brick dwellings.

The *Boerum House*, on Division avenue, between Broadway and Kent avenue (see cut on next page), and the *Rensselaer* house, on Clymer street, near Kent avenue, long remained as mementoes of the past.

**Old Bushwick Mills**—both tide mills.—*Luque's* (later known as Master's), the year 1664, by Abraham Jansen, who received a grant of the mill-site and privileges, was, with the exception of Brower's mill, on Gowanus creek, the first established in the present city of Brooklyn. It stood on a branch of Maspeth (Newtown) creek, near the junction of

Grand street and Metropolitan avenue. "A few years since," says Mr. T. W. Field, "there was no more striking scene near the metropolis than the view at this point. As the road to Jamaica struck the marsh, a rude bridge, with the most fragile railing which ever deluded a tired passenger to lean against it, crossed a narrow strait in the mill-pond. A few rods to the left stood an unpainted hovel dignified with the name of the Mill, against the side of which, and dwarfing it by comparison, hung suspended the gigantic wheel. Close to the bridge stood another tenement whose meaner appearance made the mill-house respectable. This was the toll-house, one of a class of structures which are only less universally detested than the quarantine and the pest-house. Across the broad level marsh, nearly a mile in width, rose the hills of Newtown, covered with their tall forests, amid which, here and there, open spaces of cultivated lands checkered the green expanse with squares of brown earth or crops of various colors. Through the green salt-meadow, the slumbrous tide-water currents wound their unseen courses; and, in the midst of the verdure, rose the broad sails of vessels, which appeared as incongruous with the green meadow as would a western prairie over which tall ships were sailing. A mile or more to the right, on another branch of Maspeth kill, stood

another structure, known as *Schenck's mill*, the site of which is only known by tradition, so completely have its ruins been concealed by alluvial deposits, swept by the rains from the cultivated fields around." Near at hand, behind the house of Mr. Nicholas Wyckoff, was still the little burying-ground where slept all of that name who heard the clatter of the mill and the splash of the sluggishly turning wheel. "The Schencks were of old Bushwick, from its settlement in the primitive times, when the Newtown tide-water ebbed and flowed to the boundary of the little plot; but now the rail-track bounds the cemetery on the one side, and the gas-lamps of Brooklyn illuminate it by night; evidences of modern habits quite inconsistent with the notions of those who spent their quiet lives to the sound of the old Schenck mill—the site of which is hardly in the traditions of the venerable Nich-

olas Wyckoff himself. The old road from John Eden's store on Metropolitan avenue around its junction with Newtown and Brooklyn retains its Knickerbocker aspect with singular tenacity; the more wonderful because the road is a frequented thoroughfare, but traffic glides past in silence and respects the repose of houses formerly much disturbed by the military tramp of the Revolution." Sixteen head-stones occupy the Schenck Cemetery; the remaining inscriptions are preserved in *Stiles' History of Brooklyn*, ii, 378, but more particularly in a valuable article, by Wm. O'Gorman, Esq., Town Clerk of Newtown, in *L. I. Weekly Star* for January 14, 1881.

The physician of old Bushwick was Dr. Cornelius Lowe, who enjoyed the practice of Bushwick, New Lots and a part of Newtown. He was an ardent patriot, unmarried, boarded with Alexander Whalley and died about 1830. He was succeeded by Dr. George Cox, who boarded in the Rev. Dr. Basset's family, removed to Williamsburgh after it became a village, and became connected by marriage with the Miller family.

**Greenpoint** since the Revolution. — Isolated by its peculiar position between Newtown and Bushwick creeks, and occupied only by a few large farms, GREENPOINT, or "Cherry-Point," as it was formerly



THE BOERUM HOUSE.

called, may be said to have enjoyed an almost separate existence from the rest of the old township of Bushwick. It contained, during the Revolutionary period, and for years after, only five (Dutch) families, each having its own dwelling-house, its own farm, and its own retinue of jolly negroes in field and kitchen.

On the shore of Newtown creek, on present Clay street, between Union and Franklin avenues, resided JACOB BENNETT, whose father, then quite an old man, owned and lived upon a farm on the opposite side of the creek, which he subsequently gave to his son-in-law, Mr. Hunter, from whom it derived its present name of *Hunter's Point*.

Some years after the war, another Bennett house was erected near the present bridge, and was subsequently sold to a Yankee by the name of Griffin; but this, likewise, has disappeared before the march of improvement.

On the edge of the meadows near the north-east corner of the present Oakland and Freeman streets, on premises since owned by James W. Valentine, stood the old Provoost dwelling, which was the original Capt. Peter Praa house.

On the river bank, between India and Java streets, was the old ABRAHAM MESEROLE house; which was originally built more than one hundred and sixty years since, although the western part of it was added about 1775. John A. Meserole, a descendant of the original proprietor and a Revolutionary patriot, had possession of the place at the time of the Revolution. A troop of Hessians were quartered in the house, and made free with all the live stock on the farm, except one cow, which the family hid in the woods, in a nook since occupied by S. D. Clark's grocery store. A building known as the Baisley house was afterwards erected on this estate, on the present Huron street, near Franklin.

On Colyer street, near and east from Washington, stood the house of old JACOBUS COLYER, the worthy ancestor of all of that name in this vicinity.

The last of the series of these originals was the residence of JACOB MESEROLE, near Bushwick creek, on Lorimer street, near Norman avenue.

These five buildings, with their barns and barracks, and the old slate-enclosed *powder-house*, below the hill (on the spot since covered by Simonson's ship-yard, and which was afterwards removed as an undesirable neighbor), constituted the whole of Greenpoint settlement.

*Cherry Point* was almost isolated because of a peculiar lack of facilities for communication with the outer world. The only road, from there to any place, began at old Abraham Meserole's barn, ran diagonally across, north-east to the east end of Freeman street, then past the Provoost premises, then south to Willow Pond, thence along the meadow to the Cross-roads, and from that point to Wyckoff's woods, so to old Bushwick church "round Robin Hood's barn" to Fulton Ferry, where the wearied traveler embarked in a ferry-scow for Coenties slip, at the city, and was thankful if he arrived there in safety, it being a little more than he had reason to expect. As for going to Astoria, it has been described as being something like taking a journey to the Moon; there being no road thither, until the erection of the Penny-bridge, in 1796, which let the people out into the mysteries of the island, and left them to feel their way around in the woods to Astoria. Each farmer, however, owned his boat with which he conveyed produce to the New York market; and, for all practical purposes of intercommunication with each other or with their friends in Newtown, Bushwick or Brooklyn, they used the boat much more frequently, perhaps, than the road.

The modern history of Greenpoint dates from the year 1832, when Neziah Bliss, in connection with Dr. Eliphalet Nott, purchased some thirty acres of the

John G. and Peter Meserole farm. In 1833, he bought the Griffin farm; and in 1834 he caused the whole of Greenpoint to be laid out in streets. In 1838 he built a foot-bridge across Bushwick creek. At about the same time the Point was re-surveyed, and the Ravenswood, Greenpoint, and Hallet's Cove turnpike was incorporated. This road, which was opened in 1839, ran along Franklin street, and was subsequently continued to Williamsburgh. Although, even as late as 1853, this road was not graded, it proved to be the opening door to the growth of Greenpoint.

The first house-builder was John Hillyer, the mason, who boldly broke ground in the field on India street, in November, 1839; the edifice, a substantial brick one, being sufficiently completed to admit of his occupying it with his family, in June of the following year. A few months after, Mr. Brightson commenced building on two lots in Java street, and almost simultaneously, three other buildings were begun, viz.: a building, which afterwards became an inn, well remembered by the oldest inhabitants of Greenpoint as Poppy Smith's tavern; the residence of Mr. Archibald K. Meserole, on the hill, north side of Eagle street, between Franklin and Washington streets; and the store-house, afterwards Vogt's paint shop, built by Cother & Ford for A. K. Meserole.

From this time buildings increased so rapidly as to defy the most active historian to keep track of their erection.

Many of these houses stood up on stilts, bearing very much the appearance of having been commenced at the roof and gradually built downward, a sufficient number of stories being appended to reach the ground. This style of building, peculiarly characteristic of Greenpoint in the earlier days, obtained mostly on the locality known by the people of that day as "the Orchard," and, also, in Java, Washington and Franklin streets, and was rendered necessary by the extreme depth of the *mud*, always the great drawback of the place.

*Trade* at Greenpoint commenced in the store-house above spoken of. David Swalm succeeded the first tradesman here.

A coal-yard was opened at the foot of Freeman street, on the East River, at the projection of the shore which originally gave Greenpoint its name. This establishment was purchased, in 1849, by Abraham Meserole, who transferred the business to the corner of Java and Franklin streets; and the yard was speedily followed by other lines of industry, and by various manufactories.

A Union *Sabbath-school* was established in the autumn of 1845, under the superintendence of William Vernoon; and sessions were held at various places in the village. The Episcopalians commenced here in 1846. The Methodist, Baptist, and Dutch Reformed denominations commenced their distinctive church or-

ganizations in 1847, and were followed by the Universalists and Roman Catholics in 1855.

The profession of *medicine* was first represented in Greenpoint by Dr. Snell, from Herkimer county, N. Y., who settled here in 1847. He was followed in 1850 by Dr. Job Davis, and he, in turn, by Doctors Peer and Hawley, Heath, Wells, and others.

The first magistrate and constable were appointed about 1843.

Mrs. Masquerier, in 1643, opened the *first school*. This good woman's ministrations were finally supplanted by the public-school system; and in 1846, a school-house was erected on the hill east of Union avenue, between Java and Kent streets, and which was first presided over by Mr. B. R. Davis. This was the commencement of School No. 22.

In 1850 a *ship-yard* was established by Mr. Eckford Webb (since Webb & Bell); and the first vessel constructed was a small steamer called the *Honda*, which was made to ply upon the Magdalena river of South America. Since that day he has constructed many vessels. Other ship-yards were established, until ten or twelve were at one time in active operation, turning out every variety of craft, from the humble skiff to the largest wood and iron steamers.

In September, 1852, the *Francis' Metallic Life-Boat Company* was incorporated, with a capital of \$250,000, and erected a large and commodious factory. They had a successful career, until the repeal, by Congress, of that section of the steamboat law respecting life-boats, when the demand fell off, and, so did the company.

The *ferry* between the foot of Greenpoint avenue and the foot of Tenth street, New York, was established, in 1852, by Nezhiah Bliss, and soon afterwards transferred to Mr. Shepard Knapp. Previously, all water communication with New York had been by skiffs, at a charge of four cents per passenger.

In 1853 the *Greenpoint Gas Light Company* was incorporated, with a capital of \$40,000, and a patronage at the outset of *twenty-six customers*. In the summer of 1854, what was projected as the *Greenpoint and Flushing plank-road* was first used. The intended termini of this road were the Greenpoint ferry and a point on the Astoria and Flushing railroad, half a mile from the latter place. By reason of the opposition of some Dutch farmers along the proposed route the road was not completed according to the original design; but united with the Williamsburgh and Newtown road at the end of Calvary cemetery.

(The history of Greenpoint, subsequent to 1854, is included with that of the consolidated city of Brooklyn).

**Arbitration Rock.**—We have thought desirable to place in permanent form, by re-producing it in these pages, the substance of a very interesting article by WILLIAM O'GORMAN, Esq., the antiquarian town-clerk,

of Newtown, published originally in the *Long Island Weekly Star*, concerning this historic land-mark between Old Bushwick and its neighbor, Newtown.

"Arbitration Rock" marked the final end of that famous fight between Newtown and Bushwick, which raged with unabated fury, from the days of Governor Stuyvesant, in 1660, to 1769. Stuyvesant loved Bushwick. He hated Newtown. He bequeathed a legacy of rancor to the two towns; but he also opened up a field on which all the brave sons of either town could display their determination to defend their boundary rights.

In Governor Cornbury's time the dispute between Newtown and Bushwick had waxed hot and furious to a white heat. It suited the Governor to a charm. He "saw" twelve hundred acres in it—he "discovered sinister practices," he realized "pernicious consequences."

The Bushwick men claimed that their boundary extended to the straight line which ran from the Old Brook School to the northwest corner of Jamaica. The Newtown men claimed that their boundary ran from the "Arbitration Rock" to the same point; or more clearly to be understood—the Newtown men claimed up to the present dividing line between Newtown and Brooklyn, where the city lamps shine on old Mrs. Onderdonk's house.

It is a long walk on a hot day from the Old Brook School to Mrs. Onderdonk's house beyond Metropolitan avenue: the longer it was, the more acres it would give to Lord Cornbury, the Governor of the province. The evidence was very conflicting between Newtown and Bushwick. The boundary line oscillated between them like a pendulum, from the arbitration rock to the Old Brook School, and so for years it had vibrated back and forward, but fastened to the same suspension point on the East New York hills in the Cemetery of the Evergreens. It was a large gore of land, and contained 1200 acres of land for Lord Cornbury. There were riots between the Bushwick men and the Newtown men, and some houses were burnt and some houses were torn down. Governor Lord Cornbury, of all men, hated "anarchy;" and he considered it to be the duty of an impartial Governor to remove the cause of such anarchy. He decided that the gore lot of 1200 acres belonged neither to Bushwick, nor to Newtown. *He also decided that the tract of 1200 acres belonged to himself, the Lord Cornbury.*

He was surrounded by a body of able counselors—Arma Bridgens, Robert Millwood, William Huddleston, Adrian Hoogland, and of course Peter Praa—Peter Praa from Greenpoint, always keen after real estate; and among these disinterested persons, or instruments, in vulgar eyes, the Governor divided the 1200 acres of Newtown land. Newtown, at this unexpected juncture, had need of trustworthy men, and on the 6th of May, 1706, the township vested all their



powers of defence in Richard Alsop,\* Joseph Sackett, Thomas Stevenson and William Hallett. This law-suit lasted twenty years, and the Town House and all the public lands of the township had to be sold to fee the lawyers, a useful precedent for future Newtown officials who may have to carry on law-suits. The result of that law-suit was not decisive; the boundary line between Newtown and Bushwick remained undecided until the 7th day of January, 1769, on which day the dividing line was run out to the full satisfaction of Newtown, and so remains to the present day.

What became of the grantees after Lord Cornbury's recall is not positively known; Newtown fought them under the name of the "Fancoumers" from 1712 to 1727, in a suit in which Richard Alsop and John Coe were plaintiffs on behalf of Newtown. Peter Praa, of Greenpoint, had sold out his patent two days after it was granted. Peter was too sagacious to trust to such titles; but the name of Bridgens, true to its instincts, broke out again in 1873, as a plaintiff in the celebrated ejectment suit against the property owners of Laurel Hill, so sensationally got up by Weston, the walker. In the columns of the *Sun* he had provided an old oaken chest with an ancient will in it, both of which little adjuncts made up a little romance only to be spoiled by the fact of the same will having been in printed form for twenty-five years previously, and continuously in every house on Laurel Hill. So history repeats itself.

The following report terminated the dispute of a century:

"Pursuant to an act of the Governor, Council and General Assembly, appointing John Watts, William Nicoll and William Nicoll, Jr., Esquires, or the major part of them, or the survivor or survivors of them, Commissioners to run out and ascertain a line of division between the Counties of Kings and Queens, as far as the townships of Bushwick and Newtown extend:—We, the said Commissioners, having called the parties before us, and duly heard and considered their several proofs and allegations, do adjudge and determine that the Division Line aforesaid, shall be and begin at the mouth of Maspeth Kills, or creek, over against Dominic's Hook, in the deepest part of the creek, and so run along the same to the west side of Smith's Island, and so along the creek on the west side of that island to AND UP A BRANCH LEADING OUT OF THAT CREEK TO THE POND OR HOLE OF WATER NEAR THE HEAD OF MR. SCHENCK'S MILL POND; AND FROM THENCE EASTERLY TO A CERTAIN ROCK COMMONLY CALLED THE 'ARBITRATION ROCK,' AND MARKED N. B., a little westward of the house of Joseph Woodward; and from said rock running south twenty-seven degrees, east to a heap of stones with a stake in the middle known by the name of the 'Arbitration Heap;' and from thence in the same direct line up the hills or mountains until it meets the line of

Flatbush, as the same is described by the survey and card hereunto annexed.

In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands and seals this 10th day of January, Anno Domini, 1769.

JOHN WATTS,  
W. NICOLL.

Scaled in presence of us, W. Wickham, John S. Roome."

The *Annals of Newtown* tells us that the survey was performed, January 7th, by Francis Marschalk, and thus describes the boundaries:

"BEGINNING AT A CERTAIN ROCK, COMMONLY CALLED THE ARBITRATION ROCK, MARKED N. B.; said rock lies N. 16 degrees 3 minutes W. 4 chains 50 links from the northerly corner of the house, formerly the house of Frederick Van Nanda, and now in possession of Moses Beigle; running from said rock S. 27 degrees E. 155 chains to a noted heap of stones, with a stake in the middle, known by the name of 'Arbitration heap,' and from thence in the same direct line up the hill or mountain until it meets the line of Flatbush."

The *Woodward House* still stands in the same good preservation that Lord Cornwallis left it in the Revolution; and the *Beegel House* is occupied by the Onderdonk family.

After the Revolution Mr. Hendrick Beegel made another survey of the line, and in 1837, during the Supervisorship of Mr. DeBevoise, the line was again run over and monuments erected over its entire length.

The late Mr. Nicholas Wyckoff, President of the First National Bank of Brooklyn, in 1880, made a proposition to the Commissioners appointed to re-survey the boundary line between Kings and Queens Counties; to "replace, at his own expense, by a monument to be approved of by the Commissioners, the old 'Arbitration Rock,' once of such importance, but blown to pieces by some parties ignorant of its historic and trigonometrical value as a 'Bench Mark' in the survey of the base line between Kings and Queens Counties."

A note in *Riker's Annals*, page 171, has led its readers into a labyrinth of confusion, and they have propagated the error far and wide—as the *Annals of Newtown* is a standard work every way worthy of its reputation for research and accurate details. The note reads:

"This house is that now occupied by Mrs. Onderdonk. Arbitration Rock has disappeared. It stood in the meadow lying opposite this house, on the other side of the road, and early in the present century was blown to pieces, and removed by individuals who probably knew not its value as an important land-mark."

In fact, however, the Arbitration Rock is as intact and sound as when the commissioners and surveyors were vociferating around it in January, 1769.

"On November 19th, 1880, another group of excited men, the late Nicholas Wyckoff, Peter Wyckoff and Wm. O'Gorman, stood around the same old rock watching its discovery by Martin G. Johnson, Surveyor. Mr. Johnson had found the old rock, from which he had started his own survey in 1850, when he had com-

\* In this connection we cannot but allude to a series of exceedingly interesting papers, by Mr. O'Gorman in the *L. I. Weekly Star*, of March and April, 1880, on the ALSOP FAMILY, of Newtown, whose ancient mansion, rich in Colonial and Revolutionary history, stood on the edge of Newtown Creek, near the Penny Bridge. It was demolished in October, 1879, and its site, as, also, that of the Alsop family burying-ground, is now within Calvary Cemetery grounds.

menced to lay out the streets and blocks of Bushwick, and mark their position with the stone monuments, still existing in the ground, all over from Greenpoint, through all the limits of ancient Bushwick as contained in the several wards now incorporated into Brooklyn. Far off through all the fields Mr. Johnson determined his angles with the theodolite and measuring-chain; from many distant points he defined the position of monuments long since ploughed over; and, when he would call out that 'there is one,' or 'one ought to be here,' there was consequent excitement to dig down and see that his calculation was correct. And, indeed, a monument was invariably found wherever the word was passed that one ought to be found. The same process through the fields revealed them in plenty; but large trees had grown up since the monuments were set in 1850, and the face of nature had changed considerably since that time. But the trigonometrical work of the young surveyor still holds good and will be the permanent base-lines for all ages to old Bushwick, no matter what name will be granted her in the vicissitudes of time."

"Finally, the converging sights of the theodolite from all the monuments intersected each other on the time-honored head of *the old Rock*, and thus established its identity beyond question. The 'Arbitration Rock' is therefore *still in existence*."

"The history of the fight between Newtown and Bushwick—a legacy bequeathed by old Governor Stuyvesant—embraces the period included between 1656 and 1769. The territory included that gore-plot of country between the old Brook School at Maspeth and the Arbitration Rock beyond Metropolitan avenue, narrowing to a point toward the hills beyond Ridgwood. In that direction there is still some undefined trouble, and the Legislature of last year issued a commission to certain persons to settle it."

**HENRY BOERUM.**—Among the old Long Island names is that of BOERUM—a name which the citizens of Brooklyn have perpetuated in *Boerum street*, and *Boerum place*. The emigrant of the family was a Hollander, and his descendants, for many generations, have been landed proprietors on the Island. His father, Jacob Boerum, married Adrianna Remsen, a daughter of William Remsen, at the Wallabout. They had eight children—Henry being next to the youngest, born April 8, 1793. He passed the days of his boyhood on his father's farm, and during the idle winter months, availed himself of the limited educational advantages afforded by the public schools of his time and locality. After he grew to man's estate, he managed the farm, which, at that time, meant hard work, as all the market truck had to be carried to the Wallabout in a wagon, then put in a row-boat, pulled across to the New York market, and sold out by measure as the hucksters now do. On November 21, 1827, he married Susan Rapelje, a daughter of Folkert Rapelje, at Cripplebush, of the well-known family of that name, which has been prominently identified with Long Island almost from the date of its first settlement. May 1, 1828, he purchased from the executors of the estate of Folkert Rapelje sixty-

two acres of land, being a part of the old Rapelje farm, at Cripplebush, for the sum of \$7,000, on account of which he paid \$2,700—money which he received as a part of his wife's dowry—and gave a mortgage for the balance, \$4,300. He was a hard worker and good manager; and, in October, 1834, he had paid off his indebtedness, the executors having given him the privilege of paying on account of the principal when he paid his yearly interest. In 1835, during the great land speculation, the homestead farm was sold, by which he secured, as his part, several thousand dollars, which, together with his earnings, amounted, in 1842, to some \$20,000. About this time, the bubble burst, taking away from him the greater part of his income. He also sold, in 1835, three and one-half acres of the Cripplebush farm for \$3,500, with which he built the house now occupied by his son, F. Rapelje Boerum. In 1853, De Kalb avenue was opened, graded and paved through the farm, and Mr. Boerum began selling lots and making loans on the property to purchasers, enabling them to erect dwellings thereon. His policy toward purchasers was a liberal one, and resulted in the rapid development of that part of the city embraced within the limits of the Cripplebush farm, and indirectly to considerable contiguous property. Within the borders of the farm now stand some 500 or 600 houses. Mr. Boerum pursued a similar policy with respect to his part of the old Boerum homestead, at Bushwick; and, it was mainly through his instrumentality that the section commonly called Dutchtown was built up and populated. In all matters of public interest he always took an intelligent and helpful part; and, although he was not, in the active sense, a politician, his judgment was often sought by those in authority, and he was many times asked to become a candidate for public honors; but he almost invariably declined, though he served two terms as Assessor, and two as Alderman of the old 9th ward. He was, from time to time, connected with numerous well-known institutions, having been an organizer and director in the old Brooklyn Gas Company, the Mechanics' and City Banks, the Mechanics', Montauk and Atlantic Insurance Companies, and as stockholder in the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and the Brooklyn Athenaeum. Mr. Boerum had seven children; a son and daughter died in infancy. *F. Rapelje Boerum* was born October 26, 1829, and now occupies the old homestead. He married Diana Remsen, May 26, 1868, and has three children living. *Charles* died in boyhood. *Susan* was born February 22, 1835, and married Charles Vanderveer, deceased, and has three children. *Adrianna*, born November 27, 1836, married Charles Bush, and *Agnes*, born September 27, 1839, died October 24, 1875. Mr. Boerum was a man of plain, unostentatious manners and unquestioned integrity. His life was a busy one from boyhood, and terminated May 8, 1868. In a quiet way he did much good, was instrumental in developing a now important part of the city, and left the impress of his business capacity and high commercial honor on the times in which he lived. He was a friend and companion of the leading Brooklynites of the period during his manhood; and his name is inseparably linked with that part of the city within the borders of which he lived and died. When he passed away his death was sincerely regretted by a large circle of friends and acquaintances, and such honor was paid to his memory as was due to one who had long been an influential resident of the city. His wife died May 18, 1859, aged fifty-seven years.

**HON. WILLIAM CONSELYEA.**—The subject of this article is a son of the late Judge Joseph and Ann (Hopper) Conselyea,

and was born in Bushwick, Kings county, N. Y., October 12, 1804.

Mr. Conselyea's early life was spent on his father's farm and in assisting his father in the milk trade, in which the latter was extensively engaged, and his educational advantages were limited to those afforded by the common schools of Bushwick. In 1835 he embarked in hotel-keeping at the corner of North Second street and Bushwick avenue, and, in 1840, removed to the corner of Grand and First streets, Williamsburgh, where he opened a wholesale and retail liquor store. In 1845, he assumed the proprietorship and management of a hotel at the corner of Bushwick and Flushing avenues. During a portion of this period, and later, he was a well-known auctioneer until his removal to his present residence, 457 Bedford avenue, in 1870, since which time he has lived retired from active business.

In 1840, Mr. Conselyea, who had, since his majority, been a consistent democrat of the old school, but never an aspirant for office, was nominated for Member of Assembly from Kings county, but was defeated by the election of his uncle, William Conselyea 1st. In 1842, he was again nominated for the same office, and was elected, and served until the expiration of his term.

April 6, 1835, Mr. Conselyea was married to Anna Maria Griffin, daughter of A. Tabor Griffin, of Bushwick, who has borne him nine children, two of whom are living. After a happy union of fifty-eight years' duration, both Mr. and Mrs. Conselyea are in excellent health, considering their ages, and are looking forward to several years more of peaceful companionship.

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HON. ADRIAN M. SUYDAM.—Jacob Suydam, grandfather of Adrian Martense Suydam, was born February 3, 1749, settled at Bushwick and married Elizabeth Leaycraft, April 14th, 1764. He was a worthy and respected citizen, and died in Bushwick, July 27, 1811. His children, who attained mature age, were George, born June 20, 1767, who married Jane Voorhees, and died at Gravesend; Gertrude, born June 25, 1770, who married Adrian Martense; Jacob, who was born March 3, 1773, and married Cornelia Farmer, of New Brunswick, N. J., and Hendrick, who was born May 16, 1778, and married Helen, daughter of John Schenck.

Jacob Suydam, son of Jacob Suydam, was the father of Adrian Martense Suydam, and died August 31, 1847. Adrian Martense Suydam was born on the old Suydam homestead, in Bushwick, where he has been a life-long resident.

November 25, 1826, and is now tilling a portion of the farm of his fore-fathers.

Mr. Suydam's educational advantages were limited to those afforded by the district schools of his native town; and he early began to assist on the farm, a portion of which passed into his possession, in 1814, when he was only eighteen years of age, and which he has occupied continuously to the present time.

January 5, 1852, Mr. Suydam was married to Sarah G., daughter of Nicholas Wyckoff, who died in 1862, having borne him four children, only one of whom is now living.

Mr. Suydam, having passed his lifetime thus far on the homestead of his family for generations before him, has seen many changes in his section of the city—of Brooklyn—and is, at this date, the only farmer, except one, living along the old Bushwick road, who has spent his days on the place on which he was born.

In 1860, there was no house on the Suydam farm, except the ancient residence of Mr. Suydam, out of which his grandfather was driven by the British during the Revolutionary war. During the year mentioned, Mr. Suydam, wishing to induce settlement in his neighborhood with a view to developing that section of the city, gave a man a lot on condition that he would at once erect and occupy a dwelling thereon; and, since then, his policy has been so liberal that, at the present time, there are no less than one hundred and twenty-five residences within the borders of the old homestead, bounded by Knickerbocker avenue, Vigelinus street, Broadway and Palmetto street, Palmetto street, Woodbine street, Evergreen avenue, Ivy street and Central avenue have since been opened through the homestead, and some of them are being rapidly improved. It was years after Mr. Suydam assumed control of his farm before there was any means of reaching the ferries, except by private conveyance, and he relates that he has seen men hunting on the site of the present City Park.

In 1855, Mr. Suydam was elected alderman from the eighteenth ward, and served one term. A few years later, he served a term as a member of the Board of Education. In the fall of 1872, he was elected a Member of the Assembly of the State of New York, and twice re-elected, serving the terms of 1873, 1875 and 1877, during the administrations of Governors Dix, Tilden and Robinson, with credit to himself and to the satisfaction of his constituents. He is, at present, one of the trustees of Bushwick Savings Bank, and a director of the Williamsburgh City Fire Insurance Company and the Kings County Fire Insurance Company.

# HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF WILLIAMSBURGH.

By

*John M. Stearns*

Esq.

OF BROOKLYN, E. D.

## THE WOODHULL SPECULATION.—

After the close of the Revolutionary War, the farmers of Bushwick pursued in peace their occupations of raising grain and cultivating garden vegetables for the New York market. But, ere long, upon the shores of the river which formed their western border, appeared the nucleus of a village; and, even while they rubbed their astonished eyes, it expanded to the fair proportions of a city. Instead of slowly amassing money by plodding labor and close-fisted huckstering, they found fortunes fairly thrust upon them by the enhanced value of their farms; due to the enterprise of others, whom they considered as Yankee intruders. They hesitated at first, dazzled by the prospect, and suspicious of the motives of those who offered it. But *finesse* prevailed and the first purchase made—the rest was simply a matter of time.

Richard M. Woodhull, a New York merchant, of intelligent and comprehensive views, albeit somewhat speculative in his conclusions, was the pioneer in this movement. He had already established a horse-ferry, from Corlaer's Hook (near the foot of present Grand street, New York) to the foot of the present North Second street, in Brooklyn; and the concentration of trade from Long Island, at this apology for a ferry, naturally suggested to him its probable occupation, to a limited extent, near the eastern terminus of the ferry, for a village. Had he reasoned from experience as to the growth of cities, he might have been deterred from this venture. New York City, which at the period of the Revolution had but 24,000 inhabitants, possessed at this time (1800) less than 61,000. There was, indeed, a highway from the settled parts of the city to Corlaer's Hook; but Chatham street was then the margin of the built up city; and the scattered farmsteads, shops and hotels along the Bowery were mere suburbs of the town. Had he stopped to consider that from thirty to forty years would be required to crowd three square miles of vacant lands with houses, and to occupy the De Lancey and Willet farms with population, before

his projected city on the opposite Long Island shore could become a practical success, he might have saved himself from infinite trouble and ultimate bankruptcy. True, he had a ferry established. But this could not accommodate the people whose employment was in New York. A horse-ferry, with two miles of travel on the New York side, before the business portion of the city could be reached, was to most persons a formidable objection to locating so far from their employment. But Woodhull was infatuated with his scheme; and, as he could not easily, in the then temper of the old Dutch residents, purchase the much-coveted land in his own name, he employed one Samuel Titus, of Newtown, to secure the title from Charles (old "Charlum") Titus of some 13 acres of his farm, which he afterwards re-purchased from the said Samuel Titus, at cost. This land, situated in the vicinity of North Second street (then called Bushwick street) was soon laid out by Mr. Woodhull in city lots, and named *Williamsburgh*, in compliment to his friend, Col. Williams, U. S. engineer, by whom it was surveyed. A shanty ferry-house and a tavern near by, were erected; one Lewis bought some lots and put up a hay-press and scales near the present North Third and First streets, where it was intended to bale the hay-crop of Long Island for shipment and the New York market; and an auction was held, at which a few building-lots were disposed of. But the amount realized came far short of restoring to Woodhull the money he had thus prematurely invested. His project was, fully, a quarter of a century too soon. It required half a million of people in the city of New York, before settlers could be induced to remove across the East river, away from the attractions of a commercial city. Woodhull found that notes matured long before he could realize from his property; and barely six years had passed before he was a bankrupt, and the site of his new city became subject to sale by the sheriff. By divers shifts, the calamity was deferred until September 11th, 1811, when the right, title and interest of Richard M. Woodhull in

the original purchase, and in five acres of the Francis J. Titus estate, purchased by him, in 1805, near Fifth street, was sold by the sheriff, on a judgment in favor of one Roosevelt. James H. Maxwell, the son-in-law of Woodhull, became the purchaser of Williamsburgh; but not having means to continue his title thereto, it again passed under the sheriff's hammer—although a sufficient number of lots had, by this time, been sold to prevent its re-appropriation to farm or garden purposes. Woodhull and Maxwell's experience was that which is common to men who think in advance of their times; but they will ever be mentioned with respect as the "fathers of the town."

**The Morrell Speculation—Yorkton.**—Meanwhile, another rival was in the field, Thomas Morrell, of Newtown, who had purchased from Folkert Titus the ancient Titus homestead farm of 28 acres; and who, with James Hazard, to whom he sold a moiety, had laid it out in city lots, and had a map made of the same, whereon Grand street was laid down as a dividing line. Morrell then, in 1812, obtained from the city of New York a grant for a ferry from Grand street, Bushwick, to Grand street, New York; the same point to which Woodhull's ferry also ran. *Yorkton* was the somewhat pompous name given to the territory along the river, between South First and North Second streets; and *Loss' map of Yorkton* was dignified to the position of a public record. The Morrell ferry gradually superseded Woodhull's in the public estimation, so that both owners became rivals; and disputes ran so high between them that they would not permit each other's teams to pass over their respective lands,—all this tended to retard the progress of the village. Grand street became the permanent site of the ferry; and the old Titus homestead (on the north-east side of South First street), long known as "Old Charlum's" *Fountain Inn*, became the head-quarters of village politics, where the destinies of town and county were often discussed, on winter nights, over hot flip and brandy slings.

But, while Morrell succeeded as to the ferry, Woodhull managed to preserve the name *Williamsburgh*; which applied at first to the 13 acres originally purchased, and had extended itself to adjoining lands, so as to embrace about 30 acres, as seen in Poppleton's map, in 1814, and another in 1815, of property of J. Homer Maxwell. But the first ferry had landed at Williamsburgh, and the turnpike went through Williamsburgh out into the island. Hence, both the country people, and the people coming from the city, when coming to the ferry, spoke of coming to Williamsburgh. Thus *Yorkton* was soon unknown save on *Loss' map*, and in the transactions of certain land jobbers. Similarly, the designations of old farm locations, being obsolete to the idea of a city or a village, grew into disuse; and the whole territory between the Wallabout Bay and Bushwick Creek became known as Williamsburgh.

**Williamsburgh.**—At the time the ferries were established, there was no open road to the water side, except that of the Newtown and Bushwick Bridge Co., which came to the shore at Woodhull's ferry. There was no open shore-road connecting the two ferries, nor any from the Wallabout to Williamsburgh; for, blind to their own interests, the owners of the shore-land refused to have any road opened over their property along the shore. Consequently the ferries could not prosper, their cost exceeded their income, and both owners died in embarrassed circumstances, and with blighted hopes. Subsequently, the ferries were consolidated.

**The Wallabout and Newtown Turnpike.**—While Woodhull (and his successor) and Morrell were at variance about towns and ferries, Gen. Jeremiah Johnson had purchased the farm of Charles Titus, 2d; and in his goings to and fro between his farm and Williamsburgh, became much annoyed at having to open and shut no less than 17 barred-gates, within a distance of half a mile along the shore.\* His proposition to the owners of these lands to unite with him in securing a legislative act for the opening of a two-road road, along the front of their property from the Wallabout Bridge to the Newtown and Bushwick Bridge road at Woodhull's ferry, was not only declined, but strenuously opposed. Whereupon, taking the matter in his own hands, he himself surveyed the proposed road, gave due notice of application, got up a petition, and by personal interest at Albany secured the required authority—and, within a month the road was opened by commissioners of the two towns. The effect was magical; for, before this there had been no means of vehicular travel with Brooklyn, except by the Newtown road from the Bushwick Cross-Roads. Now the business largely increased at the ferry, and public attention began to be drawn more than ever to the many advantages of residence afforded by Williamsburgh. For, situated as it was, opposite the very heart of New York city; with a bold water-front upon the East river of a mile and a half extent (entirely under the control of its own local authorities); with a suti-

\* In this connection we quote, from a MSS. lecture by Mr. Barnes, on the Wallabout, the following description of the "old time" route from Gen. Johnson's place, corner Kent avenue and Hewes street, to East New York: "travel up the farm-lane (Hewes street) some distance beyond the present Lee avenue church, thence south-easterly along the farm to the *then* woods, across the creek to Nostrand's lane, and up this lane (near the site of Husted & Co.'s brick stables) on Flushing avenue, then south-east to land of Henry Borum, thence southerly to Bedford, then along old Bedford road, facing to the south of Fort Greene to Baker's Tavern on Long Island railroad to Fulton street; then a road or lane, to the ferry, six miles away—a journey of two or three hours.

This, however, was short, compared with the distance from the late Abm. Remsen's house (adjoining Scholes farm, and but one beyond Gen. Johnson's). This family had to travel up their farm line to the church at Bushwick, thence along the Bushwick road to the Cross-Roads, and along Cripplebush road to residence of Jacobus Lott, where Nostrand's lane intersects the road, and then along the Cripplebush road and Bedford road, past Fort Greene to Baker's Tavern on Long Island railroad, and to Fulton street, and so to the ferry—ten miles and taking four or five hours."

cient depth for all ordinary commercial purposes; and with the ground rising gradually from the river to the height of about forty-five feet above water-level, it seems as if, on the whole, Nature had designed the territory for the site of a city.

**Village Beginnings.**—The village grew apace; the M. E. Church (organized 1807) erected, in 1808, the first place of worship; the North American Hotel was built about the same time; and by 1814 the town numbered 759 persons. About 1819, a distillery was established at the foot of South Second street, by NOAH WATERBURY, whose enterprise has earned for him the appellation of the "Father of Williamsburgh." A native of Groton, Ct., he came, in 1789, at the age of fifteen, to Brooklyn, where he learned to be a shoemaker.

At the age of twenty-one years, together with Henry Stanton, he took the Catherine Street Ferry; and, after carrying it on awhile, entered into the lumber trade, and subsequently established a rope-walk. He removed to Williamsburgh, in May, 1819, where he purchased from Gen. Jeremiah Johnson the half-acre of land on which, with Jordan Coles, he built the distillery above referred to. Subsequently purchasing eight adjoining acres, he laid it out in city lots; gradually got into the real estate business; frequently loaned money to the village in its financial embarrassments; originated the City Bank, of which he became the first president; as also of the Board of Trustees of 1827; and, in many ways, promoted the welfare of the village. His life was one of enterprise, public spirit and high integrity.

It was early found that the laws relating to common highways were entirely inadequate to the opening of streets and other improvements needed by a village or city. If the plan had been adopted of opening all streets by common taxation, improvements might have been effected; and, in the end, their expense would have been equitably apportioned; that is, when the whole village plot was improved alike and paid for. But, in this new community, every person wished his particular property improved, and had rather pay the expense than have such improvements deferred till the general public were willing to assume the special burden of such improvements. Mr. DAVID DENHAM, a merchant and citizen of New York, became interested in Williamsburgh, by purchase at the Sheriff's sale, when the right, title and interest of James H. Maxwell (Woodhull's son-in-law) were sold out on execution in favor of James J. Roosevelt; who continued to follow the property with his financial accommodations, until 1818 brought the final extinction of the original pioneer interest of these two founders of the village. Dunham shared his purchase with Moses Judah and Samuel Osborn; established the first steam-ferry from New York to Williamsburgh; and had his name applied to Grand street, as laid down on "Loss' Yorkton Map." But, though the street was soon widened ten feet on the

north side, the new name would not stick. Grand street it was, and is to this day.

In 1820, David Dunham, above named, donated land near North First street, on which a school-house was erected, known as District School No. 3, of the Town of Bushwick; and the population of the town, including the village, was, at this time, 934, of which 182 were colored. In July of this year, an advertisement in the *Long Island Star* announces a bear-shooting, at the Fountain Inn, which "the rifle companies of Major Vinton and Captain Burns are particularly invited to attend with their music. Green turtle soup to be ready on the same day, from 11 A. M. to 10 P. M." In October, following, three persons were indicted at the Kings County General Sessions *for bull-baiting at Williamsburgh!* which argues well for the moral sentiment of the new community. In 1823, the village sustained a severe loss in the death, by drowning, of Mr. David Dunham, "merchant and citizen of New York," whose efforts had "materially changed the appearance of Williamsburgh, and were adding constantly to its improvements. The Williamsburgh Ferry and Turnpike, maintained by him, are real and lasting benefits to the city and to Long Island." "Never disheartened by disappointment, nor diverted from his object by indolence or opposition," he was justly considered "the friend and founder of the village." His ferry continued to run; manufacturers (especially of whisky or rum and ship-cordage) acquired something of a foothold in the place; and there appeared one or more corner groceries and a village tavern, besides "old Charlum" Titus' *Fountain Inn*. In 1825, Garret and Grover C. Furman, New York merchants, purchased twenty-five acres on South First street, about 150 feet from what is now Grand, near corner of Second street, at \$300 per acre; and had it mapped into city lots. They then offered the Dutch Reformed congregation their choice of a lot 100 feet square upon which to erect a church, which was accepted; then building-lots began to be enquired about in that neighborhood. The first two lots were sold to Dr. Cox for \$150, after which they sold so fast that the price was advanced to \$200, and in less than six months to \$250, etc.

**Village Organization.**—It was not long before the necessity of a village organization, with officers possessing the power to compel the opening and improving of streets, the digging of wells and the erection of pumps, and other public conveniences, and to restrain and limit the unneighborly selfishness of particular citizens, was made fully apparent. Moreover, no general survey of a village plot had been made; and the people, in public and private, began to discuss, and gradually to agree upon the need of a village charter.

**Village Charter.**—Finally John Luther and Lemuel Richardson (or rather George W. Pittman), having purchased sites for two rope-walks between North Third and North Fourth streets, procured a survey of the ad-

jacent lands into street and lots, and made application to the legislature for an act which should confer upon the place the usual village powers. The desired act of incorporation was passed April 14, 1827, defining the village boundaries as "beginning at the bay, or river, opposite to the Town of Brooklyn, and running thence easterly along the division line between the towns of Bushwick and Brooklyn, to the lands of Abraham A. Remsen; thence northerly by the same to a road or highway, at a place called Sweed's Fly, thence by the said highway to the dwelling-house, late of John Vandervoort, deceased; thence in a straight line northerly, to a small ditch, or creek, against the meadow of John Skillman; thence by said creek to Norman's kill; thence by the middle or centre of Norman's kill to the East river; thence by the same to the place of beginning." The charter named five Trustees to serve till the time of the village election, viz: Noah Waterbury, Abraham Meserole; Lewis Sanford, and Thomas T. Morrell; also, John Miller, who declined serving; which Board were duly sworn in April 26th, and organized April 30th, by choosing Noah Waterbury, *President*; Abraham Meserole, *Secretary*; and Lewis Sanford, *Treasurer*. Their only noteworthy acts were the granting of several tavern licenses (the proceeds, \$10 each, accruing to the poor of Bushwick), and procuring a survey of the village to be made by Daniel Ewen, for which \$300 was raised by special tax. The first village election was held Nov. 5, 1827, and the old trustees were re-elected, by a nearly unanimous vote, except that Peter C. Cornell was elected in place of John Miller. The votes being one to six of the population gives 114 as the population of the village proper. While the new city fathers speedily evinced a commendable degree of enterprise in their efforts towards the improvement of the place, their wisdom was not altogether commensurate with their zeal. The charter itself lacked precision, in some respects, and its vagueness seems to have been often improved by the early trustees as a warrant for the exercise of extraordinary powers. This embroiled them in legal and political contentions with private owners of property, who, for the first time, became subject to municipal regulations. Thus, the attempt to open 1st street along the East River front between South 1st and South 2d streets, gave rise to a long and bitter lawsuit between Jordan Coles, as plaintiff, and the village, in which Coles was partly successful, but the open street remained in the hands of the public. Again, the Board, unwittingly, became the cats-paw of certain domestic speculators who rendezvoused at the old Fountain Inn, during the days of its decline, and these hatched schemes to possess themselves, under color of the law, of the parcels of land owned by non-residents and outsiders. By instigating taxation and assessment sales of these lands, with and without law, they were enabled to purchase them "for a song," much to the detriment

of the village, as it gave rise to much uncertainty as to land-titles. Yet the practice continued until probably 10,000 lots were sold for non-payment of taxes or assessments, while there was not law enough in these assessment or tax-titles, under which to acquire or hold the lands. But thus were matters too often managed by those who "had the ear" of the little handful of trustees, who held their sessions in a small, wooden house, with its gable to 1st street, about 75 feet north of Grand; wherein, also, was a tin and stove store, and the office of a Justice of the Peace.

In January, 1829, the village had reached a *milestone* in its career—it had a *debt*! In February it had a *post-office*, Lewis Sanford, postmaster; in June, a *hook and ladder company* was formed; and, during the year, North 3d and South 2d streets were built, and 1st street between Grand street and the Brooklyn line was opened. In 1829, a school census revealed these facts, that Williamsburgh had a population of 1,007, including 72 blacks; 148 dwelling houses, including 10 stores and taverns; 5 other stores; 5 rope-walks, 1 distillery; 1 turpentine distillery; 1 slaughter-house, and 2 butchers; 3 lumber-yards; 1 M. E. church; 1 Dutch Reformed church; 1 district and 3 private schools, etc., etc. In 1832, a Methodist Protestant church was formed by secession from the M. E. church. In 1835, a census of the town of Bushwick (inclusive of Williamsburgh) gave a population of 3,314; and 2 distilleries, 4 rope-walks, and one grist-mill, with a total of \$398,950 of raw material consumed, and \$481,272 produced—all of which (except the grist-mill) were within the village limits, as were, also, 3,000 of the population. This was exclusive of many smaller establishments, wood-yards, storehouses, etc., together with 72 village streets, of which 13 were opened, and about 300 houses. This year, also, the *W. Gazette* was started. These facts illustrate the progress the village had made, despite the errors of its trustees, the machinations of land-jobbers, and the depressing failures of its first founders. And, encouraged by these facts, its inhabitants bestirred themselves to procure an enlargement of their charter and a strengthening of their corporate authority. On their application, a legislative act was passed, April 18, 1835, extending the village limits by adding all the present 16th Ward, of Brooklyn, from the Sweed's Fly Road to Bushwick avenue, and the present 18th Ward, as well as a portion of the 18th Ward, between Humboldt street and the old Wood Point Road. The new charter created a Board of nine Trustees, to be annually elected, of which Edmund Frost was chosen President, and the energy and enterprise of the new board soon inaugurated a new era in the history of the place. Several large and substantial wharves and docks were built, new avenues of trade opened by the construction of turnpikes, more streets laid out, and (against the strenuous opposition of New York) a new ferry established to Peck Slip, a move

ment which, more than anything else, perhaps, contributed to the increase of Williamsburgh's population and prosperity—adding, as it did, an inducement to many New Yorkers to locate their residences on some of the beautiful and eligible sites covering the eastern shore of the East River.

**The Era of Speculation.**—Speculation had now grown to enormous proportions. In 1828, in addition to the "Williamsburgh" and "Yorkton" settlements, the Jacob Berry farm, of twenty-five acres, next to the East River and Brooklyn line, and the Frederick Devoe farm, of ten or twelve acres, extending from the river to 7th street and along South 5th and 6th streets, had been laid out in village lots and mapped. In 1833, one Holmes Van Mater, of New Jersey, having purchased the David Van Cott property, of twenty-four acres, extending from 6th street to the old Keikont road, near 10th street, and from South 3d to Grand street, and for the space of a block to North 1st and beyond, between 9th and 10th streets, including the "common" near 9th and North 1st streets, had it mapped out into lots.

John Miller had a map made of 11 acres, the northerly half of the land, inherited from David Miller, his father, being part of the old Keikont farm and of a piece of land extending from 7th to 10th streets, bought by David Miller of one Roosevelt. Maria Miller Meserole had the south half of the same land—mapped by the village and then in partition in 1849.

Nearly all of the present Thirteenth and Fourteenth Wards of Brooklyn—the original chartered limits of W.—was laid out into lots before 1834, when a general map of the village was made by D. Ewen, setting out the entire chartered village into prospective city lots. Prior to this Edmund Frost, Silas Butler, Charles O'Handy and William Sinclair had laid out twenty-five acres, extending from near North 2d street to North 10th, and from 6th street to 9th street. Sharp and Sutphen had also seventeen acres laid out from North 2d to North 7th, and from 3d to 6th street. These parcels were of irregular shape and matched to contiguous lands by irregular lines.

A company purchased several farms and combined them in a map of 939 lots of land in W., the title being vested for convenience of sale and the execution of deeds in one William P. Powers, a handsome, amiable and honest young man, who was law-clerk in the office of John L. Graham, in New York. Powers also held title to one hundred and ninety-seven lots located between 9th street and Lorimer street, and South 3d street and North 2d street, and lying on both sides of Union avenue; also, he held title to the Abraham Meserole farm, west of Graham Ave.

The greatest rivals of Powers' associates were one John S. McKibben and Thomas Nicholls, and, associated with them as banker and friend, one George D. Strong. Nearly all the land south of the Meserole farm, held by Powers as above, to the Brooklyn line and the cross-roads,

was purchased by McKibben, Nichols and Strong, and mapped into city lots, both upland and swamp. The only portion of what was made the third district of Williamsburgh, remaining to the original owners, was the part of the Meserole farm lying between Graham avenue and Bushwick avenue, the John Skillman farm, near North 2d street, to the northerly village line and to the meadows, and from Union avenue to near Leonard street—the land formerly of John Conselyea, deceased, afterward owned by Andrew J. Conselyea, as to part, and Mrs. D. W. Townsend and Mrs. Schenck as to other portions, and John Devoe as to land on the southerly side of North 2d street, from Lorimer street to Bushwick avenue. But all these several farms and lands were mapped as city property by their old farm-owners and put on the market in competition with the land-jobbers' stock-in-trade. The village had already assumed jurisdiction, under an act extending its limits, passed in 1835, and laid out the streets as they are now recognized.

Such are the matter-of-fact details of the growth of the paper suburbs of our growing town. Its springs of life were hid away in the speculating haunts of New York city in dingy upper rooms of 142 Fulton street and No. 5 Nassau street, where often at mid-day and at early night-fall gathered those who thought there was something more than Kidd's money hid away in the meadows and uplands of the old town of Bushwick.

At public and private sale large numbers of lots were disposed of, moneys were paid for margins and mortgages were taken back for part of the purchase money to twice the intrinsic value of the property. All went merrily, the land-jobbers were reputed to have become wealthy, and their customers saw fortunes in their investments. And the pasture-lands and fields which then made up nine-tenths of the territory of Williamsburgh were clothed in the hopeful imaginings of the holders of lots with all the incidents of a busy, bustling town.

During the year 1836, a company purchased the Conselyea (formerly Daniel Bordet's) farm, together with an adjoining estate, traversed by the present Grand Street, laid it out (part of map of 939 lots), and erected thereon fourteen elegant first-class dwellings, designed to be the pattern houses of a new and model city. The advance in real estate and population was unprecedented—lithographed property-maps set forth in glowing colors the unrivalled opportunities and advantages for profitable investments, which were eagerly caught up by the uninitiated, until by this time (1836) real estate in Williamsburgh actually exceeded its present value.

**The Period of Financial Collapse.**—Finally the bubble burst, and in the crash which followed—known as the "General Commercial Crisis of 1837," Williamsburgh suffered deeply. A perfect business paralysis



ensued, which seriously shattered the foundations of real and substantial property. Between cause and effect, intervening circumstances delayed the ultimate catastrophe to collateral investments; so that not until 1839 or '40 did Williamsburgh fully realize that the *prestige* of her second founders was lost. The fourteen model dwellings were followed by no similar erections; here and there a half-finished building, abandoned by its owner, suggested the vanity of all human hopes; the noise of the axe and the hammer was stilled throughout the village. From 1840 to 1844, the Court of Chancery was fully busied in clearing away the rubbish of private bankruptcies from investments made in these lots, that they might stand discharged from judgments and liens in the hands of responsible capitalists, and in a condition for improvement.

**A New Start.**—But, healthful legislation, and increasing facilities of access, gradually restored business to its wonted channels; so rapid was the progress of the village that in less than ten years, its population had doubled, and its ultimate position as a city became a fixed fact in the public mind. For, during the period (1835-1844) where political and financial history had been so unhappy, social, religious and educational advantages had rapidly increased and helped to lighten the general gloom. In 1837, the *Episcopal Church* was organized in the city; in 1838, the *Williamsburgh Lyceum* was established; in 1839, the Baptist denomination gained a foothold. In 1840, the opening of the Houston Street ferry opened a convenient transit to residents employed in the great manufactories along the eastern water front of New York City; the village press was augmented by the advent of the *Williamsburgh Democrat*; and the first omnibus line was established. The village census gave a population of 5,094. In 1841, the *Roman Catholic* denomination established itself in the Dutch village neighborhood; and the Odd Fellows organized a branch. In 1842, the First *Presbyterian*, and in 1843 the First *Congregational Church* was commenced; while during 1843-'44 the place became a favorite resort of the "Millerite," or Second Advent craze. In 1844, an amended village charter was adopted, under which three trustees and one collector were chosen for each district. From this point, up to 1850, the social, educational and literary interests of the village assumed more definite proportions and vigor; while the number of church organizations was rapidly increased in each of the denominations; and the *Williamsburgh Bible Society* was formed. In 1848-'49, appeared the first Village Directory, published (as also the year following) by Henry Payson; and continued 1850-'55, up to — by Samuel and T. V. Reynolds; the increase of population from 1845-1850 being 19,448. The year 1851 saw the establishment of the *Williamsburgh Savings Bank*; the *Williamsburgh Dispensary*; the *Division Avenue Ferry*, and three new churches.

**Civic Aspirations.**—Williamsburgh now aspired to

be a city. Several motives conspired to this result. The village government had often exercised doubtful powers, in matters of public improvement. Its several charters, subjected, as they were by the courts, to the strictest construction, were found to allow of too little discretionary power, to be always available in emergencies which were constantly arising. Again, the village trustees being mostly men of limited business experience, could not readily work up to a technical and strictly constructed law. It is due, however, to the old village trustees, to say that their carelessness, as to the provisions of the charter, oftener arose from an over-ambition to serve the public in its needed improvements of the village, than from any corrupt motives of personal profit. And, not infrequently, they found themselves, as a Board, involved in litigations initiated by the very persons who had petitioned for improvements, and whose property was benefited thereby, perhaps to even double the assessments charged to it for the expenses. An unwise fostering of the fire-department, for the sake of its political influence, also gave undue influence to the *coedly* element of the population, which soon showed itself in an increased turbulence of the town-meetings, at which alone legal taxes could be ordered. This, with the impossibility of getting, in the town-meeting, a fair expression of the real public voice—since the meetings could be so "packed" as to leave nine-tenths of the village voters out on the sidewalk—led to legislation for the establishment of a Board of Finance, which should determine the amounts to be raised for specific objects and provide for their insertion in the tax levy.

**The City Charter.**—Such a Board was created March 1, 1849, by act of Legislature, and consisted of the President and Trustees of the village, with the Town Supervisor and nine other men especially elected for the purpose. But this did not suffice; and finally, the required city charter, drawn by S. M. Meeker, Esq., Village Counsellor, received the sanction of the Legislature, April 7, 1851; the election for city officers was held in November following, and the charter went into effect January 1, 1852.

**Street Nomenclature of the Village of Williamsburgh.**—The names of public streets frequently express fragments of local history. Some are only to be interpreted by traditions. Men who lay the foundations of a city, or map the locations so to be occupied, are apt to respect a scripture example, in calling their cities "by their own names"—or, by the names of favorites and friends. Bushwick had no very conspicuous men; so, when it became the site of a future town, no local denizen had sufficient sympathy with the matter to wish to couple his name with what seemed so absurd a project. Thus, in old Williamsburgh no streets preserve the memory of the Titus, the Miller, the Meserole, the Devoe, the Berry families; nor, even that of its founders, Morrell or Woodhull.

Mr. Dunham sought, indeed, to apply his name to the present Grand street; or, at least, to sixty feet wide of the southern portion of it. But the widened street, as a centre line of departure in the designation of all the streets, took the more significant name of Grand street. And *Woodhull* street, in designating the streets by numbers, was succeeded by "North Second" street. All the regular streets of the village were designated by numbers, except Grand street and the lane known as Water street; a portion of the old road along the East River shore; and a street laid out on the Commissioners' map as "River street," whose site was over the waters of the East River and has been closed.

In the designation of the streets *First* street ran along the East River, *Second* street was parallel or nearly parallel to it, and so the streets were numbered as we went east from the East River up to Twelfth street. And north from Grand street the first street having the same general directions was *North First* street. The old Jamaica turnpike, from the old Ferry out, was *North Second*, and so on to *North Thirteenth* street, at or along Bushwick creek. Then, south of Grand street and running in the same general direction, though not exactly parallel, *South First* street to *South Eleventh* street, at the old Brooklyn line. In this use of numerals there was a certain degree of convenience; but strangers are often confused by confounding First street with North First, or South First, etc.

But it is in the present Fifteenth and Sixteenth wards, that we find the streets designated by *historical* names. *Lorimer* commemorates the middle name of John and James *Lorimer* Graham, two famous land-jobbers there in '36. *Even* street was named after Daniel Ewen, city surveyor, residing in New York, who surveyed both the old and new village. *Graham* *avenue* still flatters the above-named Grahams. *Smith* street commemorated Morgan L. Smith, and *Bushwick* *avenue* was the boundary between Williamsburgh and Bushwick. *N. Second* street was extended on the map of the new village to Bushwick. *Powers* street, in the present Fifteenth ward, was named after William P. Powers, a clerk in the office of John L. Graham, who was made nominal proprietor of 939 lots for the convenience of their sale and conveyance to purchasers; also of several other parcels of land. He appears on the record as the greatest land-jobber of the period. While, however, profits belonged to others, the responsibilities and losses were sometimes fathered on him. But he has always borne the character of an upright, honest and cultured gentleman. *Ainslie* street was named after James Ainslie, Esq., who for many years administered local justice in Williamsburgh. *Devoe* street represented the Devoes, who owned a block or two of land adjoining North Second street on the South side, and whose home was in Bushwick—and not Frederick Devoe, whose farm was on the East

River shore. Going north of North Second street, or the old Jamaica Turnpike, the first street parallel to it is *Conselyea* street, whose eastern portion runs through the farm late of Andrew J. Conselyea, and about an acre of land of William J. Conselyea his brother; hence the name; *Skillman* street, now *Skillman* *avenue* to distinguish it from Skillman street in old Brooklyn, derived its name from John Skillman, Senior, who lived and died on the same farm, at or near the present residence of Charles M. Church, son-in-law to John Skillman. *Jackson* street was probably named from Daniel Jackson, who, in connection with Graham and Reuben Withers, had some landed interests in Williamsburgh. *Withers* street was named after Reuben Withers, late proprietor of the Houston Frost Ferry. *Frost* street was named from Edmund Frost, who was associated with Handy, Sinclair and Butler in a tract of land in the Fourteenth Ward. *Richardson* street was named for Lemuel Richardson, whose worthy name is elsewhere mentioned as one of the pioneers in building up Williamsburgh. *Sanford* street (changed to *Bayard*) was in honor of Edward Sanford, a distinguished lawyer associated with John L. Graham in many real-estate transactions. His name had been applied to a street in the Seventh Ward, Brooklyn: hence the change. The substituted name was probably taken from the name of a street in the city of New York.

Going south from Grand street *Remsen* street was named after Abraham A. Remsen, who owned land at its junction with Union Avenue. There is another Remsen street near the City Hall, old Brooklyn, and the name of the E. D. street was changed to *Manjer* street in respect to Daniel Manjer, Esq., who, about the time, represented the Fifteenth Ward as Alderman.

Nicholas Wyckoff, the late worthy President of the *First National Bank*, has his name perpetuated, in *Wyckoff* street. *Stagg* street, with its homely name, has doubtless out-lived its patron, who is probably known to but few, if any, of the existing citizens. *Scholes* street represents the family of James Scholes, dec., late of what is now the 19th Ward. *Meserole* *avenue* was named from the Abraham Meserole through whose farm it ran; and not from Abraham Meserole, husband of Maria Miller of the present Thirteenth Ward. *Johnson* street, or *avenue*, commemorates the memory of the late General Jeremiah Johnson. *Boerum* street was named from old Jacob Boerum, who had a farm of 58 acres within the limits of the present Sixteenth Ward, Brooklyn. This farm was the subject of the great Cleveland law suit.

*McKibben* street was named after John S. McKibben, who caused a map of a part of the Jacob Boerum farm, as the land of McKibben and Nichols, to be made and filed. *Siegel* street, which (on changing the name of duplicate streets in Williamsburgh by the Common

Council of Brooklyn) superseded Marshall street, was in honor of General Siegel of the late war.

*Moore street* was named for the late Thomas C. Moore, a manufacturer of wire sieves and netting, who owned lands in that neighborhood. *Varotte street* was named from Lewis F. Varotte, a land speculator, who operated on the sale of village lots there and elsewhere.

*Cooke street* was probably named from an old resident near the Cross-Roads. *Debevoise street* (covering a part of the old Brooklyn and Newtown turnpike, by the Cross-Roads) was named from Charles Debevoise, who lived on Flushing avenue, near the western terminus of this street.

The custom of perpetuating the names of the oldest inhabitants by those of streets is more marked in the old City of Brooklyn than in Williamsburgh. In the latter place many whose names are thus perpetuated were really residents of the City of New York, and only interested in Williamsburgh, as speculators.

#### Trustees of the Village of Williamsburgh.—

1827. Noah Waterbury, *Pres.*; Abraham Meserole, *Sec.*; Peter C. Cornell; Thos. T. Morrell (son of Thos. and bro. of John M.); John Miller (had a small farm of about 11 acres, below South 2d and South 4th, from the East River to near 10th street, and a large family); Lewis Sanford, *Treas.*; J. Brush, *Collr.*; Daniel S. Griswold, *Vll. Counsel*; David Dunham, *Clrk.*

1828. James M. Halsey, *Pres.*; John Henry (rope-maker, and owner of lands between 2d and 4th streets); John Luther; James Ainslie (for many years Justice of Peace); Samuel D. Mills (milkman); J. Brush, *Collector*; W. C. Townsend, *Clrk.*; Abraham Meserole, *Treas.*

1829. Same board—except John Morrell (with his brother, Thomas T., real-estate dealer; also grocery business, conspicuous in early village affairs; was father of Francis V. and Thos. L., who carried on, for many years, the builders' hardware business, being predecessors of existing firm of C. H. Tiebout & Sons), *vice* Ainslie, and John Devoe (son of Frederick D., whose farm was between South 4th and South 6th streets, East River and 7th street), *vice* Sam. E. Mills; John Devoe; P. C. Cornell, *Clrk.*; Riley Clark, *Treas.*

1830. Edmund Frost, *Pres.* (lumber dealer, and interested in lots in N. W. part of village, in company with Butler O'Handy & Sinclair); Lemuel Richardson (grocer; afterwards manufacturer of locks and builders' hardware, corner Houston and Norfolk streets, New York, of which the business of H. C. Richardson, deed, 59 Grand st., was a branch. Was a careful business man, of excellent judgment, and sterling qualities; was about the only citizen who survived the land-jobbing speculators of the village, without becoming bankrupt, which gave him a high position in the community); John Eddy; Jacob Berry (owner of Berry farm, father of Abraham J. B., the first Mayor of the subsequent city of W.—of Richard B.,

cashier of Tradesmen's Bk., N. Y.—of Exander B. and of a dau. who m. Geo. Bell, of N. Y.); James Ainslie; Peter Way, *Clrk.*; John Luther, *Treas.*; P. P. Schenck, *Collr.*

1831. Edmund Frost, *Pres.*; Lemuel Richardson; Sam. D. Mills; and James Ainslie; Geo. W. Pittman cordage mfr.; Chas. H. Davis, *Clrk.*; John Luther, *Treas.*; P. P. Schenck, *Coll.*

1832. James M. Halsey, *Pres.*; John Luther; John Henry; John Morrell; Richard Churchward; Jacob Berry, *Treas.*; P. P. Schenck, *Clrk.*; W. J. Fish, *Clrk.*, part of year.

1833. Edmund Frost, *Pres.*; Lemuel Richardson; Jas. Ainslie; John Morrell; Wm. Leayercraft (son of Rich. L. of N. Y.; father of Wm. H. L. and Mrs. Demas Strong; was a J. of P., and had an office with Justice Leonard T. Coles, in old Trustees Hall, 1st St.); John L. Graham, *Vll. Counsel* (figured largely in land-jobbing, became bankrupt 1837–40; Jacob Berry, *Treas.*; P. P. Schenck, *Clrk.*

1834. Edmund Frost, *Pres.*; Lemuel Richardson; Wm. Leayercraft; John Luther; John Eddy; P. P. Schenck, *Clrk.*; J. L. Graham, *Counsel*; Lewis Sanford, *Coll.*

1835. (Most of the 15th and 16th Wards, of present City of B., added to the village; number of Trustees increased to nine).

1836. Wm. Leayercraft, *Pres.*; Daniel Wood (carpenter and wood-turner; Edwin Ferry (grocer); Jas. Guild (hotel-keeper, cor. No. 6th and 1st sts., and was a noted miniature painter); Robert B. Dikeman (rope-maker, and brother of late Hon. John Dikeman); James Ainslie; Henry Cooke; T. B. Clarke (segar mfr.); Rich. Leayercraft, *Treas.*; Alanson Ackerly, *Coll.*

1837. Edmund Frost, *Pres.*; John Morrell; John Skillman (owner of a large farm in present 15th Ward; was father-in-law of Chas. M. Church, Esq., who resides at old Skillman homestead, cor. Lorimer and No. 2d sts.; also had sons John and Joseph S., still living); Abm. Meserole; John Snyder (undertaker in 15th Ward); Lemuel Richardson; Henry Cooke; Hiram Ross; Wm. Leayercraft; P. P. Schenck; Joseph Conselyea, *Treas.*; Alanson Ackerly, *Coll.*; Ed. Sanford, *Counsel*.

1838. Edmund Frost, *Pres.*; John Skillman; John C. Minturn (distiller); Henry Cooke; John Wright (father of Mrs. Grahams Polly; a coppersmith in Cherry st., N. Y.); John Snyder; David Garrett (rope-maker and prominent in fire department); Wm. Wheaton (wheelwright); P. P. Schenck, *Clrk.*; C. L. Cooke; Judge Jos. Conselyea, *Treas.*; Alanson Ackerly, *Coll.* (restaurant, foot of Grand st., until very lately); Edward Sanford, *Counsel* (lost with the S. S. Arctic).

1839. John C. Minturn,\* *Pres.*; John Skillman;\* C. L. Cooke;† David Garrett; Henry Meigs (of So. American R. R. fame);‡ John Cook (an Englishman, lawyer); Thos. J. Fenwick\* (bookbinder, partner with one Fiori); Jas. D. Sparkman† (cork mfr., in Co. with Jas. L. Truslow; made a fortune; was at one time a

supervisor; became Pres. of Mfrs. Nat. Bank, which he caused to be rem. to the building of Brown Bros. & Co., Wall st., N. Y.; but complications in some new bus. ended in his bankruptcy, impairing, for a time, the standing of the Bank, which, by returning to W., with capital made good by stockholders, has since been prosperous. Mr. S. afterward became Pres. of Fireman's Fund Ins. Co., and d. a few yrs. since at Bordentown, N. J., at the old Joseph Bonaparte mansion). Eusebius Hopkins;\* Wm. Frisby; J. J. Bennett;† Jacob Backus;† Alanson Ackerly;† Samuel Cox† (flour and feed, cor. 4th and So. 1st sts.; a careful bus. man); William Golder† (builder); Henry Payson, *Clerk*; John Titus, *Treas.*; Hiram Ross, *Coll.*

1840.—Henry Meiggs, *President*; William Lake, (dock builder and contractor); Wm. Golder;\* D. W. Van Cott\* (milkman); Hiram Ross; And. J. Conselyea\* (owned a forty-five acre farm in present Fifteenth Ward, partitioned 1833 among his heirs); Edward Neville\* (kept K. Co. Hotel, corner of First and South Seventh streets—now occupied by W. City Fire Insurance Co.); John Titus\* (merchant tailor, First, near Grand street); L. D. Cuddy;|| John Skillman; John Cook;|| Eusebius Hopkins; Col. Wm. Conselyea, Jr., *Treasurer*; Henry Payson, *Clerk*; Alex. S. Tuttle, *Collector* (livery stable). 544 names on poll list this year.

1841.—John C. Minturn, *President*; A. B. Van-Cott (jeweler); Jasper E. Cropsey (owned property in Grand, between Third and Fourth streets), refused to serve; James Fiori (of Fenwick & F., bookbinders); L. D. Cuddy; Wm. Richardson (son of Simon R., partner of Wm. Wall, cordage manufacturer); Peter V. Remsen (son of Abraham A., lawyer for many years in Williamsburg, noted for the elegance of his chirography and the skill and exactness of the law papers which he prepared); George Doyle (builder); Richard Berry; Henry Meiggs; Edmund Frost; Noah Waterbury; Henry Payson, *Clerk*; W. Conselyea, Jr., *Treasurer*; W. D. Lowerre, *Collector*.

1842.—John C. Minturn, *President*; L. D. Cuddy; Lemuel Richardson; P. V. Remsen; James Noble (coal); Robert Seeley (restaurant, South side of Grand street, near Ferry); Daniel D. Winant (billiard-table manufacturer, New York, School Trustee in Williamsburg for two or three years; after the consolidation a member for some years of Brooklyn Board of Education); Marvin W. Fox (from Bozrah, Connecticut, teacher); Nathaniel Willett (enterprising builder—erected present Calvary P. E. Church and City Armory, and mason work of Christ's Church, on Bedford avenue; at one time owned Union Hall, corner of Clymer street and Division avenue); James N. Engel,

*Treasurer* (distiller, foot South Second street, mainly of burning fluid and camphene); W. D. Lowerre, *Collector*. No Counsel elected 1841 or '42; A. D. Soper acted. 670 names on poll list.

1843.—John C. Minturn, *President*; Lemuel Richardson; Peter V. Remsen; M. W. Fox; D. D. Winant; Wm. Lake; David Garrett; Eusebius Hopkins; W. D. Lowerre; Henry Payson, *Clerk*; Richard Berry, *Treas.*; Jeremiah Meserole, *Collector* (saloon N. E. cor. Gd & 1st sts).

1844.—Noah Waterbury, *Pres.*; Robert Sealy; Benj. N. Disbrow (wholesale liquor, N. Y.); John A. Burdett (had ppy. interests in Gd. st., cor. 10th—still lives at Newtown, L. I., a garden farmer); Timo. Coffin (a native of Block Island; as a shipmaster followed the seas for many years; at length, settled on shore and run a freight-line of sailing vessels to Philadelphia and Baltimore; some financial reverses came to him towards the close of his life. He became *pres.* of the Board in 1845; *coll.* of taxes in 1852 under the new city government; was a man of amiable temper, polished manners, and a kindly benevolent spirit, and an honorable, upright and honest man); Isaac Sherwood (a leather merchant of New York); A. P. Cummings (one of the proprietors of the N. Y. *Observer*, which, by his economy of expenditures, he made a financial success. He res. at cor. of So. 9th and 4th streets, where he had 24 lots of land, which passed to the hands of a Dr. Wade. The house has given place to stores, fronting on 4th st., and the other lots are now occup. by the res. and garden of Jost Moller, Esq., the sugar refiner, and that of Hon. Sigismund Kaufman); B. S. K. Richardson, *Treas.*; Grahams Polley (an extensive distiller, cor. of No. 4th and 1st sts, began life as a carman; rose to independence; took a great interest in popular education and in charity to the poor); Alfred Curtis (a book-keeper, eldest son of Lemuel R., a stage proprietor; was at one time in bus. with his father. He ran a line of stages in New York up to about the time of his death, which was sold to give place to street railroads for enough to give his family a competence. He served as village treasurer to acceptance. His wid., a sister of Andrew B. Hodges, still lives. A dau. m. Gen. Jeremiah V. Meserole, and another is now the wid. of the late Dr. John A. Brady); W. S. Wiggins, *Coll.* (Shoemaker, Ewen st.); Paul J. Fish, *Con'l* (lawyer in W. several years; came here in 1836 or 7; devoted his chief attention to real estate; was for a time Master in Chancery; shifted his residence from W. to Watertown, N. Y.; came back; then lived in Plainfield, N. J.; finally died poor).

The Village Charter was this year amended and adopted, in which three trustees and one collector were chosen for each of the Districts.

1845.—Timothy Coffin, *Pres.*; Thos. J. Van Zant (acquired a good estate in umbrella bus. as partner of Alex. McDonald, in N. Y.; at this time was in

Five Trustees (\* res. this year and their places were filled by special election; † one refused to serve.

Of above Board those marked \* resigned before term expired; || elected at special election.

coal bus, in W., at foot of So. 5th st.; a prominent member of the First Baptist Church; lacked the education and culture fitting one for public life); Jonathan Odell (merchant in New York; had quite a plot of land N. W. cor. of So. 8th and 2d sts., which he afterwards sold to Thomas Brewster and moved away); James Dobbins (rope-maker, employed some years by Schermerhorn, Bancker & Co.); John Hanford (hatter in Grand st., betw. 4th and 5th streets, was an excellent politician; went to the legislature for several years; and, though he failed in business, his compensation of \$300 a session, as it was then, enabled him to live without employment for the balance of the year, with his wardrobe as if just taken out of a band-box); Grahams Polley; David Lindsay (carpenter in the Third district, elected as a Democrat; with limited opportunities he was a man of practical good sense, and generally respected as honorable in his devotion to public interests; became a Republican during the war; was father of David and George Lindsay, members of Assembly some two or three years); Isaiah Pittman (cordage mfr.; after selling out to Schermerhorn, Bancker & Co. the walk from 2nd to E. of 4th, betw. No. 3d and No. 4th sts., went to Connecticut, where he died some years since); James M. Aymar (stationer and bookbinder, was elected J. of the P., and afterwards devoted his attention to the office during his term. He was a man of fair intelligence, but dogmatical in his opinions); B. S. K. Richardson, *Treas.*; C. Daniels, *Coll.*; Richard Walsh, *Coll.* (a respected citizen of the present 14th ward, coll. several years; by trade a shoemaker); Isaac Henderson, *Coll.* (afterwards interested in the *N. Y. Evening Post*, from which he accumulated quite a fortune, and is the owner now of the building 206 Broadway, New York, in which the paper is published); G. E. Baker, *Coll.*; Henry Baker, *Clerk.*; P. J. Fish, *Counsel*.

There were this yr. 856 names on poll list—but a large non-voting pop. was then in the village, as the State Census the next yr. gave vill. about 11,000 pop.

1846.—David Lindsay, *President*; William Wall; Timothy Coffin; Thomas J. Van Zant; John Hanford; Eusebius Hopkins; James W. Stearns (milkman in North Fifth street); James M. Aymar; James Roper (a respectable builder); J. J. Snyder, *Clerk*; B. S. K. Richardson, *Treasurer*; Levi Darbee, *Collector* (proprietor of the *Williamsburgh Gazette*, started by Adrastus Fish, brother of Paul J. Fish, from 1835 to 1838, when it was transferred to Levi Darbee. It was continued as a weekly journal till January, 1850, when it was changed to a daily, and so continued to the time of its suspension, on the consolidation of Williamsburgh and Brooklyn; and it was superseded in the city patronage by the Brooklyn Daily Times. Mr. Darbee was industrious, but lacked the breadth of enterprise and tact essential to maintain a new enterprise); R. Walsh, *Collector*; I. Henderson, *Collector*; Homer H.

Stewart, Esq., *Corporation Counsel* (a cousin of ex-Governor John W. Stewart, of Middlebury, Vermont, a graduate of Middlebury College, and a lawyer of good practice and ability. In some special matters his services were of special utility to the village); J. Quin, *Street Inspector*.

1847.—Timothy Coffin, *President*; William Wall; Thomas J. Van Zant; William Lake; James Gallaudett (a shoemaker, afterwards a grocer in Grand street); Henry Abworth (a coal-dealer at the foot of Grand street, noted for having written and published a book against the Bible, but was honest in his dealings); Stephen Waterman (*member* of the firm of Burr, Waterman & Co., manufacturers of patent iron strapped blocks for ships; the business was prosecuted with a fair success and after the death of Mr. Waterman by his surviving partners); John H. Gaus (a baker, at 135 Ewen street); Charles W. Houghton (mahogany dealer in N. Y.; at one time Pres. of the late *Farmers' and Citizens' Bank*); George E. Baker, *Clerk* (continued in the office for three years; went to Washington and was for several years Private Secretary to Hon. Wm. H. Seward, Sec. of State; afterwards edited and published the speeches of Mr. Seward—which had quite an extensive sale); Levi W. Ufford, *Treas.* (a respectable dry-goods merchant, in First street, and though, at one time, well off, after the burning of Central Hall, in Fifth street, which he owned and failed to have insured, he had adverse fortune, and he died about a year since, in South Brooklyn, quite poor); William H. Colyer, *Coll.* (printer and publisher; a relative, I believe, of the Harper Brothers); S. B. Terry, *Coll.*; D. Chichester, *Street, Will and Pump Insp.*; Rich. Walsh, *Coll.*; no *Atty. or Counsel* chosen.

1848.—Noah Waterbury, *Pres.*; Wm. Wall; Stephen Waterman; Wm. H. Swezey (from Newark, N. J., who returned there soon after his official term terminated; he was a substantial citizen); John S. Trott, Jr. (with his brother was a distiller; their business was afterwards removed to Cherry street, N. Y.; but John S. Trott died some years since and his brother continued the business); Abraham D. Soper (an able lawyer who failed in retainers in cases of importance, by his almost constant practice in the Justice Courts; he subsequently represented the town in the Legislature. In whatever he undertook, his practice was adroit and generally successful. He removed to W. Virginia and purchased a large tract of land, part of which he sold to some oil speculators, at prices that gave him a competence for the rest of his days; he became a member of the Constitutional Convention, that organized the new State of W. Va.; he was one or two years in the Legislature and then became a Circuit Judge, and rode his circuit, generally, on horseback, over the rough roads of the country, till he was over eighty years of age. There is no doubt but Judge Soper's influence

and labor in the State of his adoption, was beneficial and conservative and at the same time progressive. He was the father-in-law of Nicholson P. O'Brien, who for many years was his law partner in W.; also of Addison Diossy, a lawyer in N. Y. Two daughters accompanied him to W. Va., married and settled there; he had two sons, lawyers, one in practice here and one in W. Virginia; Henry McCaddin (an undertaker, whose business was the north side of Grand street, near First street); John H. Gans; Abel Smith (for several years Colonel of the 13th Reg. of the State Militia; he carried on a liquorice factory, on Devoe street near Lorimer. At the commencement of the war of the Rebellion, Col. Smith recruited a regiment in the N. part of the State, which he intended to accompany to the front. But, in taking the cars at Ballston, N. Y., he accidentally fell under the wheels and was killed); George Joy (stone cutter); W. H. Colyer, Richard Walsh, Stephen Ryder, *Collectors*; L. W. Ufford, *Treas.*; Geo. E. Baker, *Clerk*.

1849. Timothy Coffin, *President*; Samuel M. Meeker (a lawyer, whose carefulness has realized a fortune, became identified with the *Williamsburgh Savings Bank*; the *Williamsburgh City Fire Insurance Company*; the *First National Bank*, and the *Williamsburgh Gas-Light Company*, from the organizations of each. In the current of a quiet life and quiet affairs, he has ever proved a safe counsellor, but has generally employed more positive lawyers, as counsel, to conduct his cases in the courts; has nursed his pet institutions, in their infancy, and though avoiding any speculative risks, he has made them a marked success; is now *President* of the *Williamsburgh Savings Bank*, whose deposits have increased since 1851, from nothing, to \$21,000,000; Wm. Bunting (a paper commission merchant, in New York); Francis V. Morrell (son of John Morrell, had a hardware store at the corner of First and North First streets, afterwards moved to the corner of First and Grand streets); John S. Trott, Jr.; Andrew B. Hodges (*Secretary* of the *Williamsburgh Fire Insurance Company*, afterwards name changed to the *Citizens*; now having its principal office at 158 Broadway, N. Y.); Henry McCaddin; C. W. Houghton; Anthony Walter (then proprietor of Union Hall, at the cor. of Meserole and Ewen Sts., now 16th ward; has since served a term as sheriff of Kings county, and one term as justice of peace); Oliver Leach (a butcher, at 105 South 4th St.); Henry E. Ripley, *Coll.* (a son of the Rev. Mr. Ripley, pastor of the Cong. church of Lebanon, Ct., came to W., and engaged in the lumber trade, foot of So. 4th st., with David Kilgour, as a partner; his business was hardly successful; but Mr. R. saved a high character for integrity, served as Collector, 1850; after the consolidation was a member of the Board of Assessors till age and infirmities admonished him to retire; purchased a handsome farm at Huntington, L. I., on which he lives, in dignified

and peaceful retirement); R. Walsh, *Coll.*; Stephen Ryder, *Coll.*; Henry Payson, *Treas.*; Geo. E. Baker, *Clerk*.

1850.—Edmund Driggs, *Pres.*; D. D. Winant; Samuel Groves (a native of Nova Scotia, followed the sea in boyhood; early came to the U. S., and served in a privateer from one of our Eastern cities, during the war of 1812; then came to N. Y., and sailed as master in merchant vessels for many years, and to all parts of the world; his wife, whose characteristics were as singular as those distinguishing sailors from landmen, accompanied him, in many of these voyages. Her kindness of heart endeared to her her husband's crews, and created in her an attachment to the sailor's home on the sea; when Capt. G. came to W. with an accumulation of over \$30,000 he abandoned the sea, and sought to follow the life of a retired gentleman. But his habits of command stuck to him; and, sometimes in public affairs, acted out his old quarter-deck disregard of the opinions of others, which interfered with his influence in public life; he was always supposed to be the original figure, of "The *mock man with the iron cane*" in the conceit of a factious club that styled itself the *Great Northwestern Zephyr Association*, that used to hold carnivals at the Neville's Hotel cor. of 1st and So. 7th st.); Horatio N. Fryatt (had a fertilizing chemical factory at the foot of Division avenue on the site of Moller, Sierck & Co's Sugar Refinery; he was in partnership with one Campbell); Chamcey A. Lay, book-keeper and supervisor for the Messrs. Kemp, Masons & Builders for many years; afterward Supt., for Torensee McGuiggin, Street Contractor; for several of the last years of his life he managed for his son, in the Hoop skirt business in Grand street near Fifth; he accumulated, including the house he occupied, some \$40,000, chiefly by careful investments in stocks); Daniel Reilly (liquor saloon); Harris Constock (a measurer of Lumber); Thomas Green (a tanner—colored sheep-skins and morocco); Henry Oltmans (Grocery at the cor. of McKibben st. and Graham avenue. In later years has been agent and surveyor for the *Kings Co. Ins. Co.*; is Trustee of the *W. Savings Bank*; is a German and always well esteemed); Henry E. Ripley, *Coll.*; James Murphy, *Coll.* (for many years a member of the Board of Education in Brooklyn, and commands the highest confidence of the people); John W. Braisted, *Coll.* (a Jeweler in Wyckoff st.); Henry Payson, *Treas.*; John Broach, *Vill. Clerk* (then Book-keeper with George W. Smith, popularly known as "*Broom corn Smith*," see biography following).

1851.—D. D. Winant, *Pres.*; W. T. Leitch (a merchant in N. Y.); Daniel Barker (a spice grinder in N. Y.); Alexander Hamilton (builder); Daniel Riley; Harris Constock; James Salters (carpenter and joiner); Fordyce Sylvester (eng. with Norman Francis in the manufacture of saleratus); Dan'l Lindsay; John Maerz (grocer, Meserole street); Benjamin N. Disbrow, *Coll.*;

Henry Cornwell, *Coll.* (a carman in the employ of William Wall); James Murphy, *Coll.*; W. H. Colyer, *Treas.*; John Broach, *Clerk.*

This was claimed to be a reform Board. But its capacity as a whole was far below the Board it superseded. It brought forward in public life two at least who under the first year of the city became defaulters to the city for a large amount of money.

**The City of Williamsburgh—1852-1854**—The first officers of the new city were Dr. Abraham J. Berry, *Mayor*; Wm. H. Butler, *City Clerk*; Geo. Thompson, *Attorney and Counsel*; Jas. F. Kenny, *Comptroller*; Horace Thayer, Edmund Driggs, Thos. J. Van Sant, Daniel Barker (First Ward); Richard White, Absalom Roper, Jesse Hobbey, Harris Comstock (Second Ward); Daniel Maujer (President of the Board); Wm. Woodruff, And. C. Johnson, Edwin S. Ralphs (Third Ward); *Aldermen.* Dr. Berry, the new mayor, was well fitted for his responsible office by a gentlemanly bearing, courteous and affable manners, liberal education, political experience and personal acquaintance with previous village affairs.

This year witnessed the incorporation of the *Farmers and Citizens' Bank*, with a capital of \$200,000; the *Williamsburgh City Bank*, with a capital of \$320,000, and the *Williamsburgh City Fire Insurance Co.*; and the establishment of the *Williamsburgh Medical Society*, and (April) the *Greenpoint Ferry*.

The third issue of the *Williamsburgh Directory* contained 7,345 names, an increase of 1,742 over those of the previous year. It estimates the population of the city as over 40,000.

1853, January—The Board of *Aldermen* was as follows: Daniel Barker; Thomas J. Van Sant; Jared Sparks; Abel C. Willmarth (First Ward). Jesse Hobbey; Joseph Smith; George W. Ratenn; Harris Comstock, *President* (Second Ward). William Woodruff; Edwin S. Ralphs; John Maerz; Andrew C. Johnson (Third Ward).

The public-school census of persons between the ages of four and twenty-one years, shows 10,907 whites and 214 colored, total, 11,121; the population of Williamsburgh being, at this time, between 40,000 and 50,000. The aggregate number of children attending the public schools of the city, during any part of the previous year, was 9,372, of which 834 had attended the entire school year. Fifteen private schools were also reported, with an attendance of about 800.

This year showed a rapid growth in institutions; the *Fulton Insurance Co.*, with a capital of \$150,000; the *Mechanics* (now the *Manufacturers' National Bank of Williamsburgh*, with a capital of \$250,000; the *Williamsburgh Missionary Society*; the *Young Men's Association*, connected with the Third Presbyterian church; the *Third* (colored) *Baptist*; the *Grace* (Protestant Episcopal); the *First Mission* (Methodist

Episcopal); the *German Evangelical Mission*; the (Roman Catholic) *St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception*, and the *St. Pauls* (German) *Lutheran* churches.

The New York Sunday School Union's annual report credits Williamsburgh with twenty-five Sabbath-Schools of every different denomination; with four hundred and sixty-six teachers, average attendance 387; 4,600 scholars registered, with average attendance of 3,239; 6,297 volumes in Sunday-School libraries. Infant-class scholars (included in above) 165. *Bushwick* had, at the same time, ten different Sunday-Schools, ninety-eight teachers, average attendance 81; 702 scholars, average attendance 472; 1,190 volumes in libraries; 55 infant class scholars.

During this year were organized the *Children's Aid Society*; the *Howard Benevolent Society*; the *Young Men's Literary Association*; and the *Young Men's Christian Association*, of Williamsburgh; the *Bushwick Avenue Baptist*; *Third Unitarian*; *Second Congregational Methodist*; *Graham Avenue Protestant Methodist*; *Ainslie street Presbyterian*, and *German Evangelical Lutheran* churches.

1854, January—Under a change of politics, the Hon. William Wall became Mayor, on the Whig ticket. Commencing life as a journeyman rope-maker, he had become the proprietor of the largest cordage-factory in the vicinity. Shrewd and successful in business matters, he lacked, perhaps, that comprehensive judgment of the complicated interests affecting the government of a city of 40,000, which would have ensured his official success. He soon came in conflict with the Board of Aldermen, and became famous for his frequent exercise of the veto-power. A compilation of these vetoes, made under his direction, by John Broach, Esq., then City Clerk, was afterwards printed in a pamphlet of over 100 octavo pages. Failing, however, to mould the Board of Aldermen to his views by vetoing their doings, he conceived the idea of annihilating a power which he had cause to esteem so dangerous; and became, during the first year of his administration, an earnest advocate of the consolidation of the cities of Williamsburgh and Brooklyn.

This was finally accomplished, by Act of Legislature, taking effect January 1, 1855.

1854. The Board of *Aldermen* was as follows: Jared Sparks; Abel C. Willmarth; John C. Kelly; Sam'l B. Terry (First Ward). Joseph Smith; Geo. W. Baker, *President*; Caleb Pink; John Linsky (Second Ward). Wm. Woodruff; John Maerz; Thomas Eames; Joseph Nesbit (Third Ward).

*City Clerk*, Wm. G. Bishop; *Comptroller*, Joseph W. Beardon; *Commissioner of Streets and Repairs*, Leonard T. Coles; *Treasurer*, Miner H. Keith; *Collector of Taxes*, Fordyce Silvester; *Attorney*, John Dean.

**The Consolidation of Williamsburgh and Brooklyn** was a measure which was twenty years in advance of the time when it might advantageously have

taken place; and, for a time, it greatly injured the local trade and social position of this portion of the present City of Brooklyn. It reduced Williamsburgh to the position of an insignificant suburb of a comparatively distant city, which was in no way identified with, or informed of the needs, economics, or real interests of its new adjunct. It was said that Williamsburgh, at the time, was bankrupt; but the more than thirty miles of streets, opened, curbed, flagged and paved, at a cost of from one to two millions of dollars, was a contribution to the new City of Brooklyn which more than balanced the debts added to the common fund.

**The Wallabout Canal.**—One of the grandest projects for Brooklyn during the days of the "City of Williamsburgh" was first suggested by the late THOMAS W. FIELD, Esq., viz.: the extension of what is known as the Wallabout Canal through a street, first called River street, 150 feet wide, laid out for the purpose, to the junction of Moore street and the present Broadway; and through Moore street to Newtown Creek.

The bridges were proposed to be raised so as to give some eight feet in the clear between them and the surface water of the canal. Lighter-barges would have been towed through without disturbing the bridges. But, if ships with cargoes in bulk were to pass through the canal, the bridges could be turned on the turn-tables. Basins at favorable places could have been constructed by private enterprise where vessels

could lay without encroaching on the use of the canal.

This grand project could have been chiefly constructed by the owners of the land that would have become water-front along the borders on each side. It would have afforded, when complete, four miles of such water-front that, ere this, would have been crowded with furnaces and factories, requiring facilities for heavy freighting to their doors.

Skill and science would have been required to keep this canal clear. But, it would have relieved the section through which it passed, of a large surplus of surface-water that concentrates there. A 50-foot street on each side of the canal would have given room to sewers, with outlets in the open bay, as at present. The waters of the canal might have been locked at the two termini and lighter-barges have been let in only at high tides and the waters have been kept at a uniform height and so not exposed the debris at the bottom, only when, in cold weather, it was undertaken to wash out and clean the channel. This canal was proposed to be excavated fifty feet wide, with wall of stone about a foot above the surface of the water at high tide, and a shelf was to be made about 5 feet wide on each side to serve for a tow-path either for horse or steam power. The bridges at the street crossings were to be about 100 feet in length, weighted at one end, so as to balance on a turn-table on the street outside the tow-path, so as to make the span 60 feet over the channel.

JOHN BROACH was born in Millstone, Somerset County, New Jersey, April 23d, 1812, of American parents, descended directly from Revolutionary stock: his great-grandparents having taken an active part in the struggle for American independence, and sacrificed all their worldly possessions in the cause, except a considerable amount of Continental paper money, which was handed down, and remained in possession of the family, but did not enrich them, at the time of his birth.

He received such educational advantages as the village school of his native town afforded, until about fourteen years of age; when, having lost his parents, he was obliged to do something for his own support, and procured employment as a boy of all work in a country store for a few months, after which he received some additional education; paying for his own tuition by assisting the teacher in the instruction of the smaller scholars.

In the spring of 1827, being then about fifteen years of age, he left his native village and came to the city of New York, an orphan and alone, to seek his livelihood.

He soon succeeded in finding a distant relative who kept a grocery store in the outskirts of the city, on the old Bloomingdale road, near what was then called Love Lane, and is now Twenty-first street; a section of the city which was called the "Reef" on account of the peculiar roughness of the locality. With this relative he engaged on trial, at any wages he might prove himself to be worth, as a clerk in his store. His friend and employer was an estimable man, but probably few portions of the city could be found less favor-

able to the moral development of a youth of fifteen years of age, just from the country.

From this time until about twenty-five years of age, he engaged in various mercantile and laboring employments, and experienced the vicissitudes which a youth, left entirely to his own direction in a large city, would naturally be subjected to. In 1835, he formed the acquaintance of Miss Cordelia Knox, a most amiable young lady (his present wife), and they were married in the spring of 1836. He then began to think seriously of preparing himself to fill some more useful and respectable position in society, and attended night schools for the study of book-keeping, and other mercantile knowledge. By this means he soon fitted himself for, and obtained employment in more extensive mercantile business.

In the spring of 1845, he removed to the village of Williamsburgh, now the eastern district of the city of Brooklyn, and soon became identified with the customary associations of a growing village. He was active in the formation of the Mechanics' and Workingmen's Library Association, and was its president for some years. In 1848, he was appointed District Clerk, and in 1849 was elected Trustee of the Public Schools in Williamsburgh, and was re-elected successively, to the same office, until 1854, when the consolidation with Brooklyn took place, and his business would not permit his attendance at the Board of Education in the Western District of Brooklyn.

In the spring of 1850 he was elected clerk of the Village of Williamsburgh, being the first clerk of the village elected by the people. He was re-elected in 1851, and remained in office



until the city charter of the village took effect in 1852. He was one of the Charter Trustees of the Williamsburgh Dispensary, in 1851, and has remained a trustee and treasurer of that institution up to the present time. He was associated with the founders of the Industrial School Association of this district, in 1854, was one of the first trustees and is still a trustee, and has been twenty-eight years treasurer of that institution.

In 1853, the Williamsburgh City Fire Insurance Company was organized, and he was appointed Assistant Secretary of that company, and in June, 1854, was called from that position, without any solicitation on his part, to the one he has since that time and still occupies, as Cashier of the Williamsburgh Savings Bank. He was also private secretary to Hon. William Wall, while he was Mayor of Williamsburgh in 1854, and up to the time of the consolidation with Brooklyn.

In 1859, he was appointed under a special act of the State Legislature, together with Hon. Edmund Driggs and George Field, Esq., of his district, and the Mayor, Comptroller, and City Treasurer of Brooklyn, on a commission to adjust and settle all claims against the late City of Williamsburgh.

By this commission the outstanding claims against the City of Williamsburgh, which had long been a source of much annoyance and litigation, were satisfactorily adjusted and settled, and the Williamsburgh Savings Bank took the bonds of the City of Brooklyn for the necessary amount to pay off the claims allowed by the commission.

He took a deep interest in the war for the Union, and his three sons, all the children he had living, were early under arms in the field. Two of them, one in the 14th Brooklyn and the other in the 8th New York regiments, were in the first battle of Bull Run. He also assisted in fitting out several other young men for the field before the Government arrangements were completed for equipping the soldiers speedily.

In 1862, his eldest son, John H. Broach, with his father's assistance, raised a company in Williamsburgh, and joining the 173d Regiment New York Volunteers, proceeded to New Orleans and participated in the siege of Fort Hudson and the battles leading thereto, and also in the Red River campaign, during which time he was commissioned as Assistant Adjutant-General.

All of his sons served during most of the war and were honorably discharged. One, however, his second son, James A. Broach, reached home only to die, within a few days after his discharge, of a fever contracted in the army at Savannah, Georgia.

Mr. Broach has been a resident of Williamsburgh thirty-eight years.

**SYLVESTER TUTTLE.**—The subject of this biographical sketch was born in Patchogue, L. I., September 5th, 1806, the son of Rev. Ezra Tuttle, who was an active and zealous minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, widely known and respected in his time. The son inherited his father's strong religious feeling, which became the controlling element in his character. Before he was twenty-one Mr. Tuttle entered upon a business career in New York City. Industrious, careful and shrewd, he rose rapidly, and in a few years became sole proprietor of a large hat and fur store in Chat-

ham Square, which was one of the only two houses in the trade that was able to withstand the panic of 1837. He became interested in the coal trade in the Eastern District of Brooklyn in 1846, and soon afterwards sold out his business in New York, associating his son with him in 1855. He rapidly extended his trade until it assumed large proportions in the city of Brooklyn.

After many years of active business life, Mr. Tuttle made a tour of Europe in 1871. While abroad he contracted a malarial disease, a recurrence of which proved fatal May 25, 1874, in his 68th year. Mr. Tuttle's energy, activity and integrity enabled him to acquire a fortune, of which he made noble use. He was called to fill many responsible positions. In politics he was an active Republican. But he was best known as a sincere Christian man, whose daily walk and conversation proved him to be an earnest servant of God. In early life he became a member of the Forsyth Street M. E. Church, in New York, then an active member of the South Fifth M. E. Church. He was also a large contributor towards the erection of St. John's M. E. Church, at the corner of Bedford avenue and Wilson street, and, until his death, served as one of its Trustees. He was greatly interested in the North Third Street Mission, and devoted much of his time to personal religious work. A man of fine feelings, he responded heartily to the cry of distress, and gave freely in charity. A public-spirited citizen, he used his means for the good of the city and of his fellow men, and his memory is cherished in the hearts of all who knew him.

**EZRA B. TUTTLE.**—Ezra B. Tuttle, a son of the late Sylvester Tuttle, a biographical sketch of whom appears next preceding this, was born in the city of New York, May 31st, 1834. He was educated in private schools in New York and in New Haven, Conn., and at Doctor Gold's once popular agricultural school, at Cream Hill, Litchfield County, Conn.

At the age of eighteen he was placed in charge of one of his father's offices, and when he attained to his majority he became associated with his father as a partner in his business.

In the summer of 1857, Mr. Tuttle was married to Miss Frances R. Day, of New Haven, Conn., daughter of Zelotes Day, Esq. They have two sons. The elder, Winthrop M. Tuttle, was educated at the Polytechnic Institute and is now assisting his father in his business. The second son, Frank Day Tuttle, graduated with honors from the Polytechnic Institute, and has recently entered Yale College as a student.

Mr. Tuttle has long been prominently identified with the leading commercial, religious and charitable interests of Brooklyn, holding at the present time the positions of vice-president of the Brooklyn Cross-Town Railroad Company, trustee of the Williamsburgh Savings Bank, director of the Kings County Fire Insurance Company; president of the board of trustees of St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church, of Bedford avenue; vice-president of the Brooklyn Church Society; trustee of Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, N. J.; trustee of the Brooklyn Homeopathic Hospital; trustee of the Brooklyn City Mission and Tract Society; trustee of the Brooklyn Bible Society, and a member of the Missionary Board of the Methodist Episcopal Church.



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1884

A HISTORY  
OF THE  
TOWN OF BUSHWICK,  
KINGS COUNTY, N. Y.

BY  
HENRY R. STILES, M. D.

AND OF THE  
TOWN, VILLAGE AND CITY OF WILLIAMSBURGH,  
KINGS COUNTY, N. Y.

BY  
JOHN M. STEARNS, Esq.

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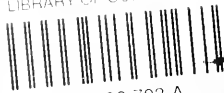
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